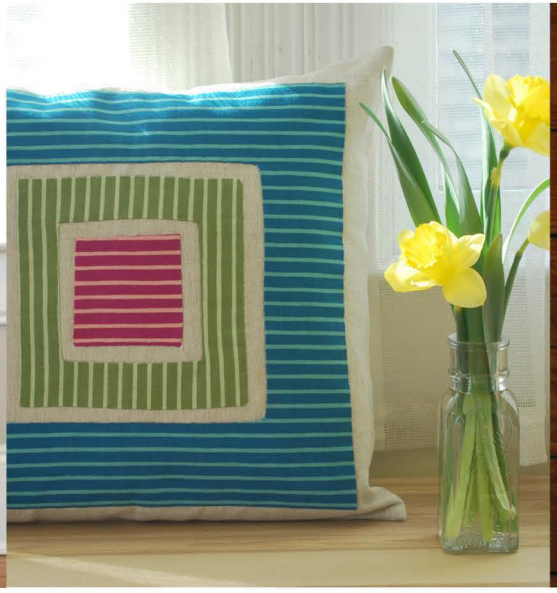
1→2→3 Sew

BUILD YOUR SKILLS WITH 33 SIMPLE PROJECTS

BAGS, ACCESSORIES, HOME ACCENTS, AND MORE



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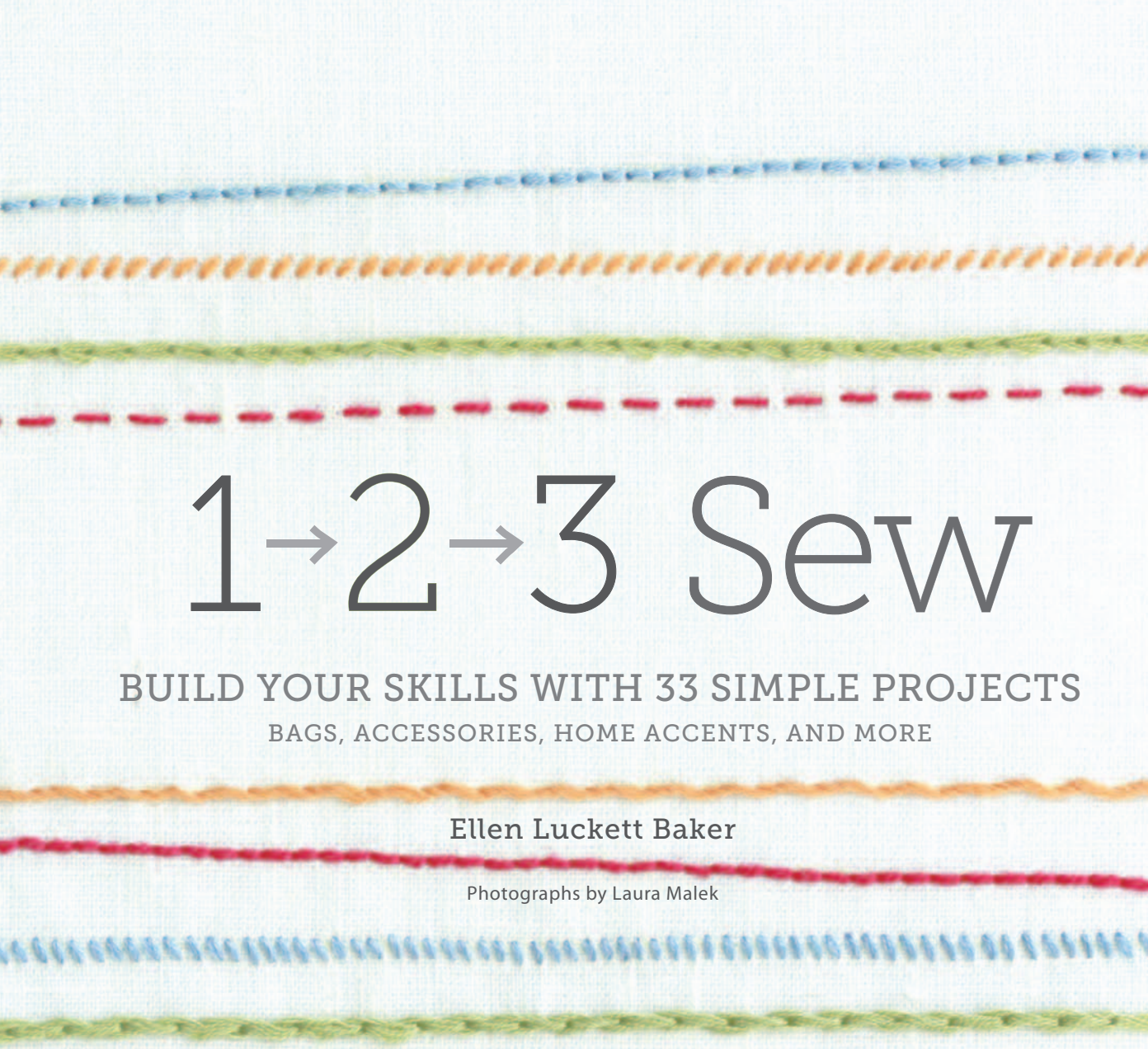
Ellen Luckett Baker

Photographs by Laura Malek



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Ellen Luckett Baker

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CHRONICLE BOOKS

SAN FRANCISCO

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SPECIAL BONUS PROJECT

Available online! Visit
www.chroniclebooks.com/123Sew
for the instructions

INTRODUCTION

I started sewing eight years ago. Before then I never considered myself a crafty person, though I always had an interest in art and design. The first thing I made was a pumpkin costume for my older daughter's first Halloween. I can't say I enjoyed every step of the process, but I do know that I was pleased with the end result—the satisfaction that comes from a tangible accomplishment. For me, sewing has always been about proving to myself that I could do it, even when I didn't know how. With that first project, I figured it out and never looked back.

After I started sewing, my mother and her generous friend Marjorie lent me their embroidery machines so I could start a part-time embroidery business from home while caring for my daughters. I was dissatisfied with the machine embroidery designs available, so I created my own, learning about graphic design and sewing along the way. Soon I launched my blog, featuring my own projects and the work of other artists. The positive feedback I received from my readers inspired me to turn crafting and sewing into a full-time career.

For some, the process of creating is more important than the end result, allowing time for creative expression and relaxation. For others, like me, it's the end product and the sense of self-sufficiency in our mass-produced world that are most valuable. I think this feeling of satisfaction is particularly important for women in our hectic society where so much is expected of us. Regardless of whether you're creating something for yourself or for others, sewing gives you the freedom to stretch out and make space for yourself in your crowded life. It allows you to realize your creative potential, reduce your carbon footprint, and learn a new skill—all this while making something useful.

With *1, 2, 3 Sew*, I hope to share the experience of sewing with you and walk you through the fundamentals needed to improve your skills. After all, there is more to sewing than just making a few cute projects. It involves centuries of techniques that you can merge with your own style to create something completely fresh. I hope to pass along the methods that have helped me grow as a sewer and in the process motivate you to try new things.

The projects in this book are organized in groups of three. Each trio is arranged so that once you master a technique in the first project, you can build on that skill to create the second and third projects. With this building-block approach, the projects in each chapter become progressively more challenging. You can sew the entire book in order, or you can pick and choose projects based on your skill level and interest. This book covers the basics, provides the tools to build on what you already know, and will give you the confidence to make each design your own, whether you're new to sewing or a seasoned professional.

The creative process is a series of choices, so for each project I have offered you a range of options. I hope this book will help even those of you who are experts learn to use a simple pattern in multiple ways. And remember—it's only fabric. Mistakes happen. Get your seam ripper ready and get started. *—Ellen Luckett Baker*

GETTING STARTED

This book is intended to be a starting point for your own creativity. *1, 2, 3 Sew* was designed with beginning and intermediate sewers in mind, but there is something for everyone here. The focus is on simple, utilitarian projects that will bring the joy of handmade into your everyday life while building fundamental sewing skills. The projects are organized in groups of three—with each project within a chapter becoming progressively more challenging so that you can learn new skills, and then build on those skills. For instance, in the Totes chapter, you'll sew a tote with straps (page 67), then a bag with a divider and pencil pocket (page 69), and finally an insulated lunch sack with a drawstring lining (page 75).

FABRIC REQUIREMENTS: All yardage requirements in this book are calculated based on a 44"/112 cm bolt of fabric, unless otherwise noted.

PREWASHING: Before you begin any project that will be washed, be sure to prepare your fabric by washing, drying, and pressing it.

CUTTING PATTERNS: At the back of the book, there are patterns for many of the projects; for simple pattern pieces, you'll need to cut out the fabric according to the dimensions indicated. When sewing projects that you plan to make multiples of, you may find it useful to make paper pattern pieces from butcher block paper. You can label each piece and file the patterns for later use. Before you cut the fabric, it's helpful to sketch out how you will cut your fabric pieces so that they can be cut in the same direction of the grain and the fabric can be used efficiently.

SEAM ALLOWANCES: The seam allowances are stated at the beginning of each project, most often ½"/12 mm. If the seam allowance is not stated within the instructions, then you can assume it's ½"/12 mm. I find it helpful to use a piece of tape to mark the seam allowance on my machine.

NOTE: The patterns in the back of the book include seam allowances.

METRIC CONVERSIONS: This book includes metric conversions throughout to make it easy for everyone around the world to sew these patterns.

OPTIONS: Each project includes options for customizing to suit your own style. I realize that some people like to follow directions precisely and others simply look at a project to find inspiration; whatever your preference, this book will work for you. The suggestions I've included will get you started in the creative process—thinking about how to alter a pattern, add embellishments, or take an idea and make it something else entirely.

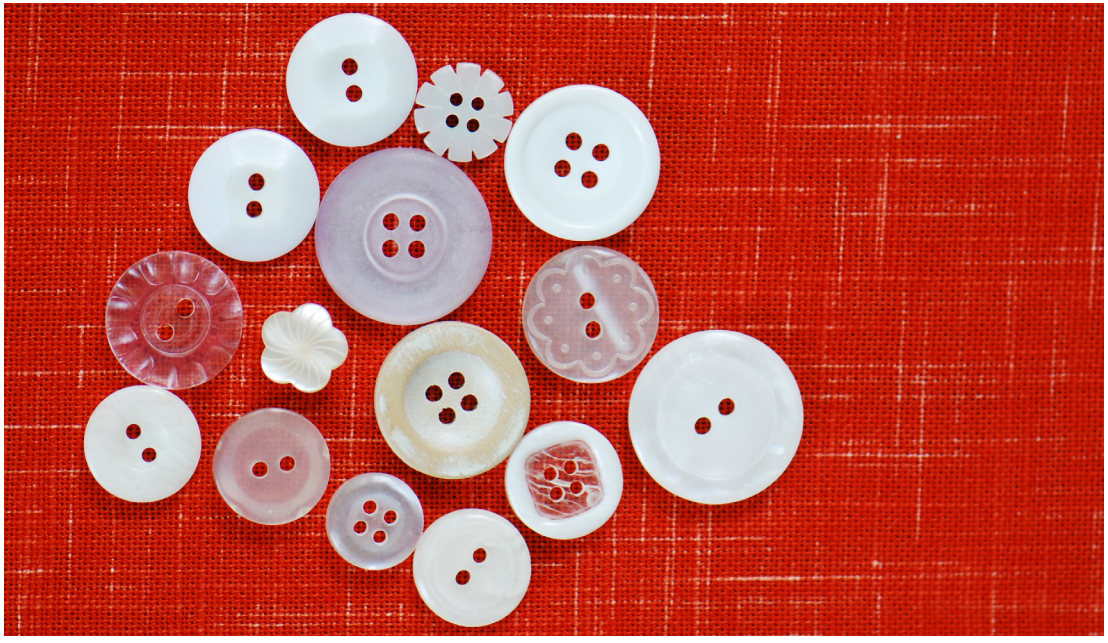
A Few Words for Beginners

DON'T FEAR THE MACHINE: There is a myth that you need mechanical skills to operate a sewing machine. You don't. Sewing machines these days are incredibly user-friendly and quite difficult to break! Though I know it sounds tedious, I always advise beginning sewers to read their sewing machine manual, where one learns how to wind a bobbin, thread a needle, and sew a buttonhole. You'll undoubtedly discover some things you didn't even know your machine could do, and you'll be amazed at how simple using a sewing machine can be.

START SLOWLY: Start off with a basic project such as pillows. Don't use the most expensive fabrics for your first project, but do choose something you like. And never begin sewing for the first time the night before something needs to be made. Sewing is supposed to be fun, not stressful.

LEARN THE BASICS: This book will teach you some basic skills, but it will also take you to the next level. If you like to learn in a hands-on setting, find a local sewing store and make some sewing friends. You can also find myriad online sources that provide inspiration as well as access to free patterns and tutorials.

MAKE YOUR OWN CHOICES: Alter patterns, make additions, and use your own creative embellishments. You'll feel proud of your work when it's done. Yes, there may be times when you make something so awful that it needs to leave your house immediately. That's okay, too. It's all part of the creative process.



CHOOSING FABRIC

Selecting the right fabric for your project can be one of the greatest challenges. I often spend more time looking for just the right fabric than I do actually sewing the project! You must consider the weight of the fabric, the number of layers that will be sewn together, as well as the drape, color, and material. Think about the purpose of the project. Will the item need to be washed frequently? Should the fabric be water-resistant? Does it need to stretch?

In this book, I've recommended fabrics for each project, but as you become more experienced, you may wish to experiment with different options. Some considerations when sewing with a new fabric include thread tension, the pull of the fabric, the grain of the fabric, and, of course, the pattern. I almost always recommend using natural fabrics such as cotton, linen, and wool because they feel better and are easier to sew. Quality is always important; paying a couple of dollars more per yard is often worth it. And when working with any type of fabric that will be washed, *always* remember to pre-shrink the fabric by washing and drying before you sew. See Resources (page 165) for some suggestions on where to find versatile fabrics.

COTTON: Quilting cottons are often the best type of sewing fabric for beginners. They are lightweight, don't pull as you sew, and are available in a wide variety of patterns and colors. Canvas and twill are great options for projects that require more durability and sturdiness.

LINEN: Linen is one of my favorite fabrics because of its lightweight feel and natural wrinkles. When cutting linen, make sure the weave of the linen runs in the same direction on every piece of your pattern. It's also advisable to press between steps and to pin often. The tension on your machine may need to be lowered to accommodate the thin nature of linen fabrics. Try sewing a scrap piece to determine the correct setting.

WOOL: Genuine wool is almost always best. A wool blend is fine, but acrylic felt will pill and has a much lower-quality feel and texture; therefore, it should only be used for projects that are not meant to be long-lasting. When using wool for a project, be sure to consider the thickness and the number of layers you will need to sew through as you work. Sewing with wool will create a good deal of lint in your sewing machine, so clean out your bobbin case when finished.

PATTERNED FABRIC: When using patterned fabric, it's important to think about the pattern scale in your decision making. Will the fabric be used for a small item? In that case, a tight pattern works best. Scale is also a consideration when combining fabrics. I like to mix small patterns with large ones—for instance, a large floral with a small check. Patterns don't always need to match perfectly to work together. When cutting patterned fabric, always make sure the pattern is right side up if it is a directional pattern. You'll also need to think about where the pattern will meet at the seams and try to match the repeat, taking the seam allowance into account.

15 ESSENTIAL TOOLS

Here is a list of the basic sewing tools you will need to have on hand to complete most of the projects in this book. There are many other sewing aids and tools available, and it's always fun to find a new toy, but these fifteen items are essential.

CHOPSTICK: You can use common objects found around the home as tools. I use a chopstick for poking out corners in fabric and for turning out fabric tubes. There are special tools (bodkins, loop turners, bone folders) designed to help with these tasks, but I prefer my trusty chopstick.

CUTTING MAT: A self-healing cutting mat is essential for cutting fabric. Together with a yardstick and rotary cutter, this will make fabric cutting a snap.

FABRIC MARKER: There are quite a few choices for marking fabric—for example, air erasable markers, tailor's chalk, and water-soluble markers. Find one that works for you and remember that you'll need a dark marker for light fabrics and a light marker or chalk for dark fabrics.

IRON: Make friends with your iron and set up a dedicated ironing board near your sewing area, if possible. Special iron cleaners can help you keep your iron free of buildup.

LARGE SCISSORS: You will need a large pair of dressmaker's shears for cutting fabric. Try not to dull the blades by using them on paper. (I inevitably do, so I buy less expensive scissors.)

NEEDLES: For the projects in this book, you'll need basic hand-sewing needles, embroidery needles, and a tapestry needle.

PINCUSHIONS: There are many types of pincushions: magnetic, standing, small, large, wrist pincushions, and so on. Find the type that works best for you and have one handy by the machine and one at your fabric cutting table (or on the floor, as the case may be).

ROTARY CUTTER: This circular cutter helps you make nice straight cuts quickly. But remember safety when using these. Push away from yourself as you cut fabric, and keep the cutter in the locked position and out of children's reach when not in use.

SEAM RIPPER: Unfortunately, you will need a seam ripper. Just insert the end into your seam and remove your mistakes.

SEWING GAUGE: This little instrument will make folding hem allowances a much easier task. A *sewing gauge* is a small ruler fitted with an adjustable gauge to help you easily measure precise folds in your fabric.

SEWING MACHINE: Every project in this book requires use of a sewing machine. You'll need just a basic machine for these projects. If you are new to sewing and thinking of buying a machine, I recommend a visit to your local sewing shop to try different models and see what features you might need. I don't think it's a bad idea to buy a used machine, but be sure to get one that was

not used commercially as it is likely to have endured many more hours of sewing than a home machine.

SMALL SCISSORS: A small pair of scissors for clipping threads should be kept next to the sewing machine. Establish a dedicated spot for these so they don't go missing when you need them.

STRAIGHT PINS: Straight pins seem to disappear so you'll need a lot of them. Glass-head pins are preferable as you can iron over them without worrying about melting plastic. It's helpful to have pins of different sizes on hand for various projects.

TAPE MEASURE: Tape measures come in various types and sizes. In addition to a retractable and plain tape measure, I often use the metal tape measure from my toolbox for larger projects such as curtains.

YARDSTICK: The basic yardstick has come a long way. It's helpful to have a clear yardstick, and even better to have a quilter's clear yardstick that is several inches wide.

OTHER TOOLS TO CONSIDER: A few other handy (but nonessential) tools include pinking shears for reducing frayed edges, appliqué scissors for cutting around appliqué designs, a quilter's square for half-triangles, a mini-iron for small seams, basting glue for quickly adhering fabric, a thimble, a pattern tracing wheel for tracing patterns, and embroidery transfer paper.

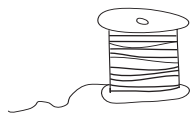
Nifty Notions

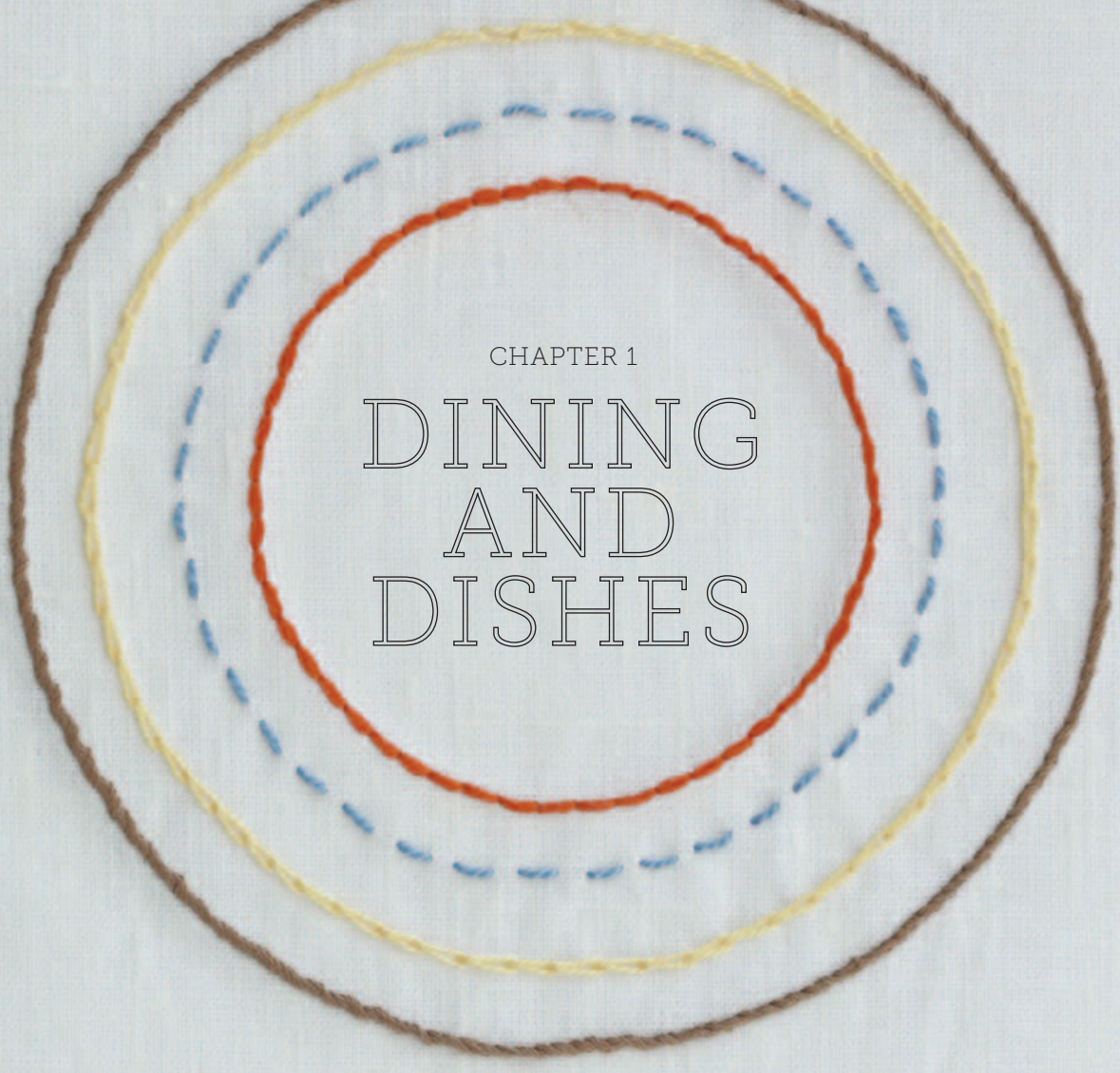
While you don't need a lot of gadgets and gizmos, there are a few things that will make sewing an easier process.

PRE-WOUND BOBBINS: I use pre-wound bobbins designed specifically for my sewing machine. These are often available only in white and black, so if you need a specific color you'll need to wind your own. In addition to saving time, I have found that pre-wound bobbins sew more smoothly than those you wind yourself.

THREAD: As you gain more experience sewing, you'll discover your own preferences for thread types. I generally use cotton threads because I like the matte finish and natural look. But synthetics may be easier on your machine, leaving less lint, and they can provide added strength for certain projects. You'll want to match the thickness of your thread with the weight of your fabric.

ODDS AND ENDS: It's helpful to keep frequently used sewing notions on hand so you don't have to make a last-minute trip to the fabric store in the middle of a project. Items such as buttons, zippers, interfacing, hooks, snaps, and fasteners are handy to have around, and you'll eventually find a use for everything.





CHAPTER 1

DINING AND DISHES

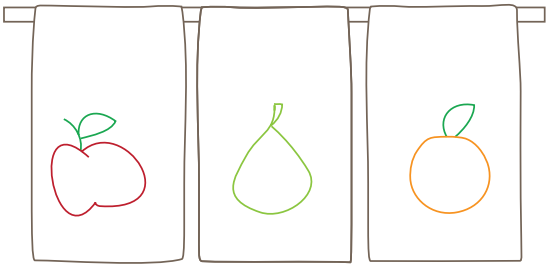
These utilitarian and eco-friendly projects will add style to your kitchen and home. The projects in this chapter include fruit-stamped tea towels, napkins with loop hooks, and a table runner with pockets. Each of these basic patterns can be made with different options—you can revisit these patterns again and again. If you've never sewn before, these simple projects will be a great introduction to the basic hem, folded and mitered corners, and seamless pockets. For more experienced sewers, each project has a unique feature that will keep your interest.

FRUIT TEA TOWELS

Get back to basics with this fruit-stamping project. These tea towels are both pretty and practical. In addition to giving your kitchen a handmade touch, they also make wonderful housewarming or thank-you gifts. Aside from the drying time, these towels can be made very quickly using fairly simple techniques.

OPTIONS

- Make the tea towels any size you'd like. Here they are 18" x 22"/46 cm x 56 cm, to be easily cut from one yard of fabric or made from fat quarters.
- In addition to the fruits shown in this project, you can use a variety of fruits and vegetables for printing, including mushrooms, broccoli, carrots, lemons, or limes.
- Choose a single stamp in a realistic color as shown here, or stamp in a repeated design, using any colors that you like.
- Forgo the fruit stamps and instead use trim, embroidery, or appliqué to embellish your tea towels.



SUPPLIES
FOR 4 TOWELS

1 yd/1 m cotton fabric
Matching thread
Fabric marker

FOR FRUIT STAMPS

Fruit
Paper towel for blotting
Paintbrush
Fabric paint in orange, red, and green
Cardboard or paint tray
Scrap fabric for sample printing
Leaf

MULTIPLY YOUR SKILLS:
basic hem, folded corners (see how-to), fruit stamping

FINISHED DIMENSIONS:
16" x 20"/40.5 cm x 50 cm

STEP 1: CUT FABRIC.

Cut the fabric into equal pieces, creating four 18"-x-22"/46-cm-x-56 cm pieces. Using a fabric marker, mark each piece of fabric in the bottom right corner, 5"/12 cm from both fabric edges.

STEP 2: STAMP FRUIT.

To make the fruit stamps, cut each of your fruit in half and leave them out for a few hours to dry. Blot with a paper towel to remove excess moisture before stamping. Brush your fruit with a paintbrush or dip it into the paint and make a stamp on a sample scrap of fabric. Apply more paint and stamp on your mark, applying even pressure. Next, dip the leaf into the paint and stamp. Repeat for all towels. Allow your fabric to dry for 24 hours.

STEP 3: FOLD AND HEM EDGES.

Follow the how-to instructions for folded corners in the next column, folding first by ¼"/6 mm, then by ⅝"/16 mm.

How-to: Folded Corners

Folded corners can finish off two intersecting edges frequently found in napkins, towels, and other linens. An easy and practical technique, it simply requires folding, pressing, and topstitching. Once you've mastered folded corners, you can move on to mitered corners (see page 18).

1 Fold and press down all edges toward the wrong side of the fabric. See figure A. Fold the two opposite edges first, and then the remaining two edges to create corners that are folded in the same direction. Press again on all sides, creating a fold the width of your edge. See figure B.

NOTE: The width of your second fold will form the hem along the edge. I recommend that you fold by ¼"/6 mm, then ⅝"/16 mm, but you may find that you prefer ½"/12 mm and ½"/12 mm folds.

2 To finish the hem, topstitch along the fold on all sides, beginning from the edge of the fabric. See figure C.

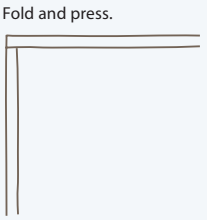


fig. A

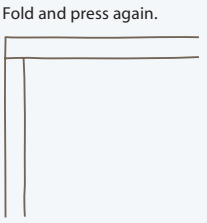


fig. B

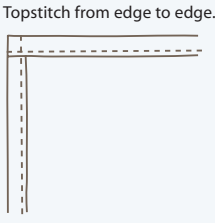


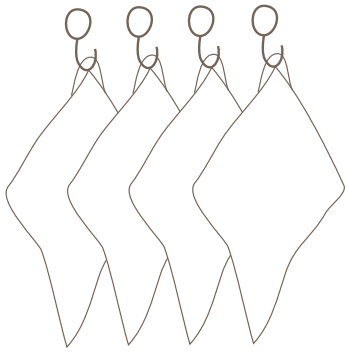
fig. C

HOOKED ON NAPKINS

Simple cloth napkins are a necessity for reducing waste and dressing up your table. This project introduces clean, mitered corners and features handy loops for hanging when not in use. One yard of fabric will make four napkins, but you could also use fat quarters of your favorite fabrics. When choosing fabric for projects that need to be cut perfectly straight, it's helpful to use stripes, plaids, or checks so you can easily line up the edges. Starting from the selvedge will also help you keep the lines straight.

OPTIONS

- Use heavy-weight linen to add elegance to any table setting.
- Recycle your thrifted finds—sheets, tablecloths, or men's shirts.
- Try a basic muslin or ticking stripe fabric to keep it simple.
- Embellish with trim, hand embroidery, or fabric stamping.
- Make these larger for more formal napkins, or make a kid-size version to tuck into a lunch box.



SUPPLIES
FOR 4 NAPKINS

1 yd/1 m cotton fabric

⅝ yd/55 cm ¼"-/6-mm-wide braided cotton cording (see note)

Fabric marker

Matching thread

NOTE: The cording should be flat in order to fit easily into your mitered corner. You may also consider using twill tape, rickrack trim, or your favorite ribbon.

MULTIPLY YOUR SKILLS:
mitered corners (see how-to)

FINISHED DIMENSIONS:
16" x 16"/40.5 cm x 40.5 cm

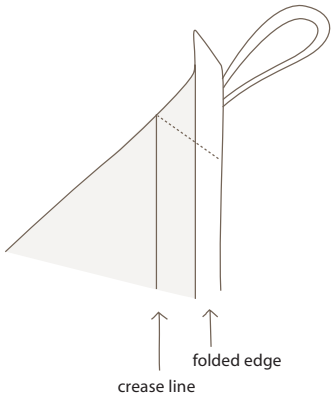


fig. A

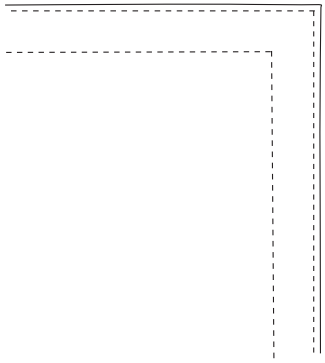


fig. B

STEP 1: CUT FABRIC AND CORDING.

Cut the fabric into four squares, each measuring 18" x 18"/46 cm x 46 cm. Next, cut your cotton cording into four pieces, each 5"/12 cm long.

STEP 2: FOLD AND PRESS EDGES.

Fold and press down the edges ¼"/6 mm toward the wrong side of the fabric on all sides. Fold the fabric down once again, this time by ⅝"/16 mm. Press to form your edge for hemming.

QUICK TIP: Pick up the iron as you press your fabric, rather than sliding it along. If you slide it along the fabric in one direction, you are more likely to distort the fabric and cause puckering in your seam.

STEP 3: MAKE CORNERS.

Follow the how-to instructions for mitered corners on the next page, but insert the loop into one of your corners as you stitch across. See figure A.

STEP 4: EDGE STITCH.

After you have stitched the hem in place, edge stitch to create a double row of stitching at the hemmed edges. See figure B.

How-to: Mitered Corners

Mitered corners can add a professional-looking finish to any of your projects. Whether you are working with clothing or linens, knowing how to make these crisp corners is a useful skill.

1 Fold and press all four edges toward the wrong side of the fabric. Then fold over and press again to form the hem.

2 Working with one corner, use a fabric marker to indicate the points where the corners meet, as illustrated in figure A.

3 Pull the corner open, leaving the outside edge fold still folded over. Turn the corner right sides facing to form a 45-degree angle, aligning the two edges. With a fabric marker and a ruler, draw a line from the previously marked points now at the outside folded edges to the intersection of the pressed hem creases. Stitch along this line. See figure B.

4 Snip the excess fabric and press this small seam open. Turn the corner back on itself to form your mitered corner. Press in place. Repeat for all remaining corners.

5 Pin and stitch along the fold to form the hem as shown in figure C.

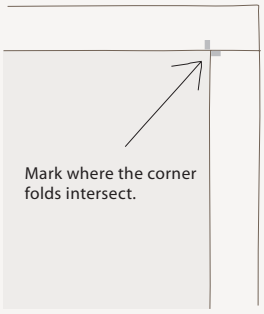


fig. A

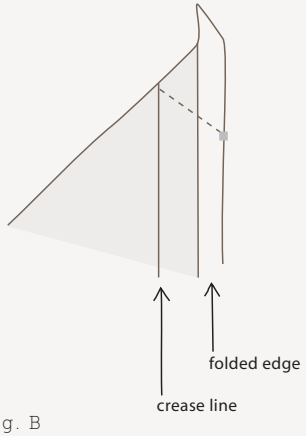


fig. B

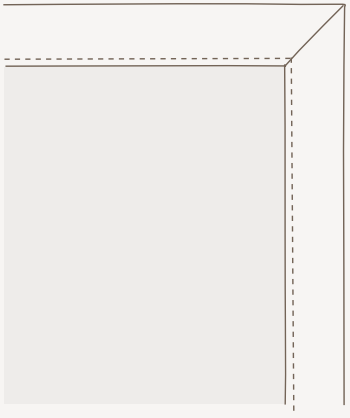


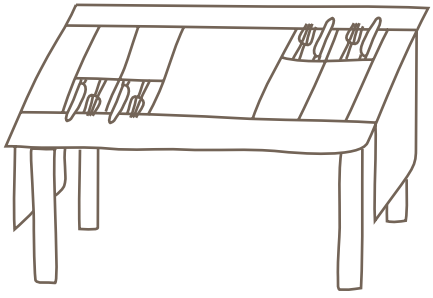
fig. C

SET THE TABLE RUNNER

Keep your place settings out and ready to go with this basic table runner featuring silverware pockets. The pattern includes four place settings with space for flowers in the center, and the finished project will add a nice, functional touch to your dining room table. In this project you'll again use mitered corners, building on your skills from the previous project, but with the addition of seamless pockets.

OPTIONS

- This table runner is 54"/137 cm long, but if you have a longer table you could add more length. (Just be sure to buy more fabric.)
- Add extra pockets to store more place settings.
- Try reversible fabric with ties on the ends to create a roll-up picnic mat.
- This project would be beautiful in traditional linen with an embroidered monogram on one end, or add trim or a decorative edge stitch for extra detail.
- Make a set of matching napkins from the same fabric.



SUPPLIES

1 yd/1 m 56"-/142-cm-wide heavy-weight cotton fabric

Fabric marker

Matching thread

Chopstick

MULTIPLY YOUR SKILLS:
mitered corners (see facing page), seamless pockets (see how-to)

FINISHED DIMENSIONS:
14" x 54"/35.5 cm x 137 cm

STEP 1: CUT FABRIC.

Cut one long piece of fabric 16" x 56"/40.5 cm x 142 cm and two small pieces, each 13" x 14"/33 cm x 35.5 cm.

STEP 2: SEW EDGES.

On the long piece of fabric, fold and press the raw edge of one side ¼"/6 mm toward the wrong side of the fabric. Repeat with all remaining sides. Then press all sides again another ⅝"/16 mm toward the wrong side of the fabric. Next, form mitered corners using the how-to instructions on page 18. Stitch around all four sides, ½"/12 mm from the edge.

STEP 3: MAKE POCKETS.

Follow the how-to instructions for seamless pockets.

STEP 4: ATTACH POCKETS.

With one pocket piece, fold and mark the center; then draw a vertical line down the center with a fabric marker. Pin the pocket 9"/23 cm from the edge, as shown in figure A, with the open end at the bottom, ½"/12 mm from the edge. Topstitch ⅛"/3 mm from the edge along three sides of the pocket, leaving the top open. Then stitch down the center line to form the pocket division. Repeat with the other pocket.

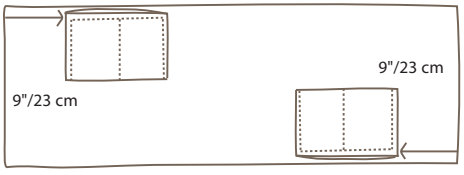


fig. A

How-to: Seamless Pockets

Fully-lined pockets have a more substantial, finished look. This pocket is designed for projects where the pocket will be on the outside. It can be added to pants, skirts, jackets, home organizers, or anywhere that you need a simple pocket.

1 Cut the fabric to twice the length of the finished pocket, with seam allowances on both sides and one seam allowance at the bottom.

2 Fold the fabric in half, right sides together, and press. Sew together along the two sides. See figure A. Trim the excess fabric and clip open the fold at the top of the seam. Press the seam open.

3 Turn right sides out and poke out the corners with a chopstick. Fold the raw edges at the opening by ½"/12 mm into the inside of the pocket piece. Press flat.

4 Pin the pocket to your fabric with the opening at the bottom and sew around bottom and both sides, as shown in figure B.

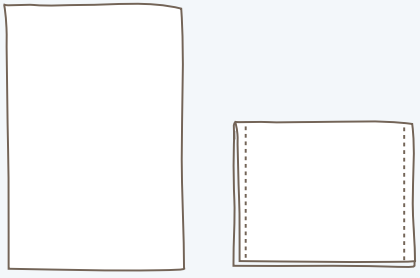


fig. A

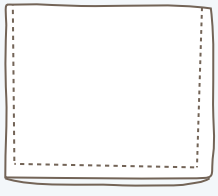
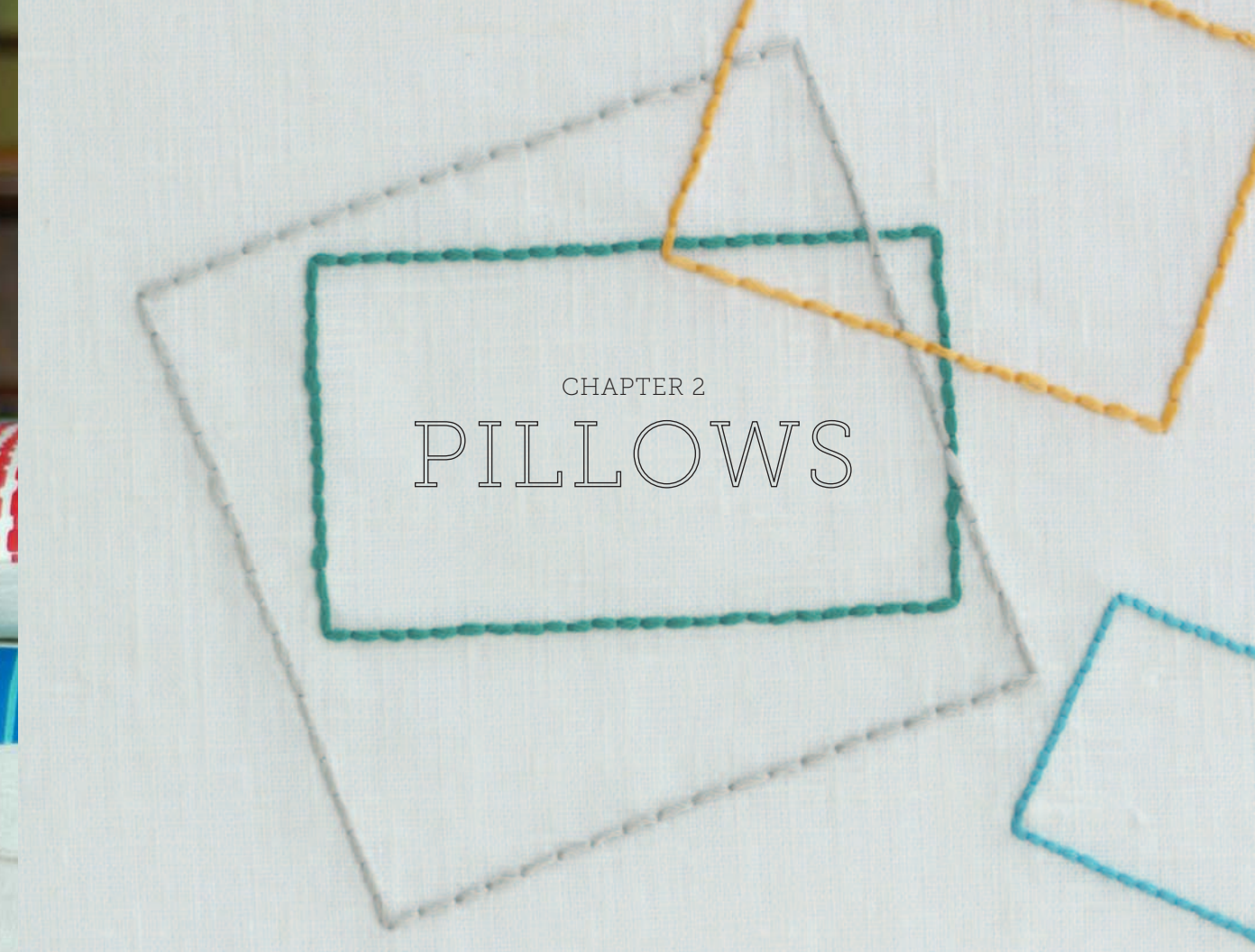


fig. B



CHAPTER 2

PILLOWS

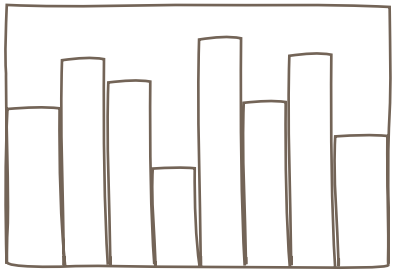
With so many styles and variations, pillows offer endless possibilities for a quick way to add life to tired décor. In this chapter, you'll learn how to make three pillows, each with a different closure design and appliqué technique. The first project uses fusible interfacing to create a simple, raw-edged appliqué design echoing the skyline. Then you'll move on to a more traditional appliqué technique using concentric squares and a simplified technique to sew by machine. The final project in this series, the floor pillow, will teach you reverse appliqué using hand embroidery.

SKYLINE PILLOW

A great way to use your favorite fabric scraps, appliqué can add unique touches to sewing projects. This pillow cover will introduce you to the basic concept of appliqué with a sewing machine. The strips are cut and sewn with the raw edges exposed to give the pillow cover a handmade look. The basic rectangle design makes it easy for a beginner, but it also provides an interesting graphic design for more experienced sewers. With the simple, overlapping closure, it is easy to slip off this pillow cover for washing.

OPTIONS

- Make different sizes or shapes using this basic pattern.
- Take this idea and make your own appliqué design.
- Try repurposing old clothing, felted sweaters, or other materials for the appliqué or pillow cover.
- Add to the handmade look with embroidery stitching (see page 160) around each appliqué strip.



SUPPLIES

½ yd/50 cm linen and cotton blend fabric

8 pieces (2"/5 cm wide x 12"/30.5 cm maximum length) cotton fabric scraps

½ yd/50 cm double-sided fusible interfacing

Matching thread

12" x 16"/30.5 cm x 40.5 cm pillow form

Chopstick

Seam allowance: ½"/12 mm

MULTIPLY YOUR SKILLS:
raw-edge machine appliqué (see how-to), overlapping closure

FINISHED DIMENSIONS:
12" x 16"/30.5 cm x 40.5 cm

STEP 1: CUT FABRIC.

Cut the linen blend fabric according to the following dimensions:

17" x 13"/43 cm x 33 cm (cut 1)
13" x 12"/33 cm x 30.5 cm (cut 2)

Cut eight fabric scraps, one in each of the following dimensions (see note):

8" x 2½"/20 cm x 6 cm
10" x 2"/25 cm x 5 cm
9" x 2"/23 cm x 5 cm
6" x 2"/15 cm x 5 cm
11" x 2"/28 cm x 5 cm
7" x 2"/17 cm x 5 cm
9½" x 2"/24 cm x 5 cm
6½" x 2½"/16.5 cm x 6 cm

NOTE: This is the order they will be laid out on the fabric, from left to right. If you want to make your own design, just be sure to cut each side piece ½"/12 mm wider.

Cut the interfacing the size of each appliqué piece.

STEP 2: SEW APPLIQUÉ.

Iron the fusible interfacing onto the back of each fabric strip and arrange the strips on the 17"-x-13"/43-cm-x-33-cm front pillow piece in a random configuration, aligning with the edge of the fabric. See figure A. If you are not using the suggested layout, be sure to place the wider pieces on the sides to account for the seam allowance. Next, iron and sew the strips according to steps 2 and 3 of the machine appliqué instructions on the next page.

STEP 3: SEW BACK OPENING.

With one of the smaller pillow-fabric pieces, press the raw edge of the longer side toward the wrong side of the fabric by ¼"/6 mm. Then fold over ⅝"/16 mm and press again. See figure B. Topstitch along the edge, ½"/12 mm from the fold. Repeat for the other piece.

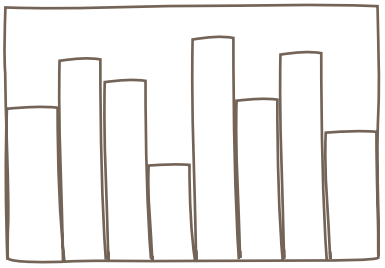


fig. A Make end pieces 2½"/ 6 cm wide, center pieces 2"/5 cm wide.

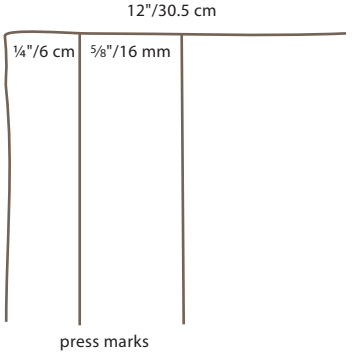


fig. B

STEP 4: PUT IT TOGETHER.

Stack the pieces right sides together by first placing the back pieces right sides up with the finished edges overlapping one another to form a 13"-x-17"/33-cm-x-43-cm rectangle. Then place the front piece on top with the right side facing down, adjusting the bottom pieces to make sure that the edges are aligned. Pin in place. Starting ½"/12 mm from the corner, sew seams along all four sides, pivoting the needle ½"/12 mm from the edge as you turn each corner.

QUICK TIP: When sewing a project with a design or pocket on the front that needs to be perfectly aligned with the side seams, be sure to sew with that side facing up in your machine.

STEP 5: TURN RIGHT SIDES OUT AND PRESS.

Clip the corners. Then turn the pillow right sides out, pushing out the corners with a chopstick. Press flat and insert the pillow form.

QUICK TIP: Before trimming fabric from seam allowances, clipping corners, or sewing an over-casting stitch, it is often a good idea to turn your project right sides out and check to be sure that everything is properly sewn and aligned first.

How-to: Raw-Edge Machine Appliqué

Machine appliqué is a handy technique that can be used in many ways. It can be added as embellishment to tee shirts, tote bags, backpacks, pillows, quilts, or almost anything that you can imagine. This simple technique uses double-sided fusible interfacing (Wonder Under) to help you hold the fabric in place while you sew. If you don't want raw edges on your appliqué design, you can press the edges under by ⅛"/3 mm before you sew. You can also use a zigzag stitch to prevent the edges from fraying. Once you have done appliqué a few times, you can try it without the fusible interfacing by simply pinning the fabric in place and holding it while you sew. It's helpful to use a dedicated craft iron or use an iron cleaner for projects with fusible interfacing, as it can leave residue on your iron.

1 Cut out your fabric and fusible interfacing in the shape of your appliqué design. Press the fusible interfacing to the back of your fabric according to the manufacturer's instructions. (If you are cutting multiple pieces of the same fabric or if you are using a detailed appliqué design, it will be easier to iron the interfacing onto your fabric *before* you cut it.)

2 Peel off the backing paper of the interfacing and press your appliqué fabric onto your main fabric.

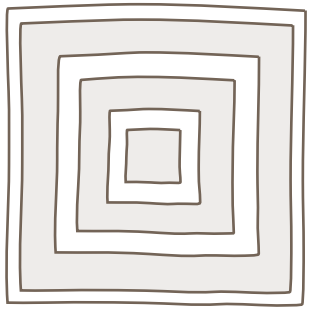
3 Starting ⅛"/3 mm from a corner, back-tack and begin stitching around the design slowly, ⅛"/3 mm from the edge. For a straight appliqué design, you can use a longer stitch, but for a curved design you will want to use shorter stitches. Finish with a backstitch.

CONCENTRIC SQUARES PILLOW

The geometric design of this project offers a fun twist on traditional appliqué. For this pillow, you will use clear thread and a blind hem stitch to sew your appliqué by machine with almost invisible stitches. This project will introduce you to a more traditional appliqué method with a shortcut machine approach, building on your machine appliqué skills. Set against a neutral background, the bright stripes and negative space of this pillow become the focus.

OPTIONS

- You can make any number of pillows based on this simple square design.
- Add a flat ruffle, piping, or other trim for more details.
- Use solid colors or patterns to make the design your own.
- Fabric possibilities for the pillow cover include canvas, felt, linen, or cotton. Repurposed fabrics would work well for the appliqué design.



SUPPLIES

¾ yd/75 cm linen and cotton blend fabric

Three fat quarters (18" x 22"/46 x 56 cm) of complementary fabrics

Transparent thread

Matching thread

Fabric marker or tailor's chalk

Chopstick

Two 1"-/2.5-cm-diameter buttons

18"/46 cm square pillow form

Seam allowance: ½"/12 mm

NOTE: If you want to use the same fabric for all three squares, you can use one 15"-x-15"/38-cm-x-38-cm piece.

MULTIPLY YOUR SKILLS:
blind hem stitch appliqué, buttonholes

FINISHED DIMENSIONS:
18" x 18"/46 cm x 46 cm

STEP 1: CUT FABRIC.

Cut the main fabric according to the following dimensions:

Front: 19" x 19"/48 cm x 48 cm
Back: 11" x 19"/28 cm x 48 cm
Back: 14" x 19"/35.5 cm x 48 cm

Then cut the three squares of fabric as shown in figure A. The outside dimensions of the squares will be 15"/38 cm, 8"/20 cm and 4"/10 cm. Take the largest square and fold it in half, then half again. Cut 4"/10 cm out of the center. When unfolded, this will be an 8"/20-cm square removed from the center. Fold the next square (8"/20 cm) in the same manner and cut a 2"/5-cm square from the folded center. Leave the smallest square intact.

STEP 2: FOLD EDGES AND APPLIQUÉ PIECES.

Press down all sides of the appliqué pieces by ¼"/6 mm toward the wrong side of the fabric. Create mitered folds at the corners by folding each side in at an angle. For the inside corners, you will clip at an angle into the corner by about 1/8"/3 mm; then roll the corner under.

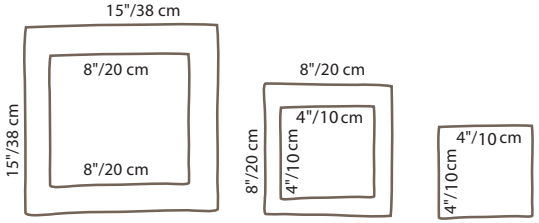


fig. A

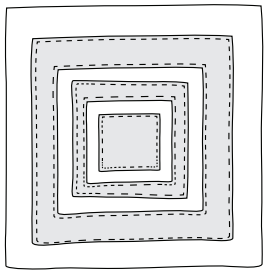


fig. B

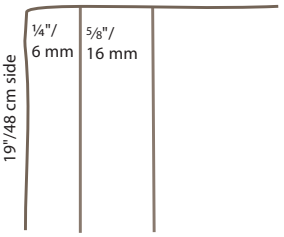


fig. C

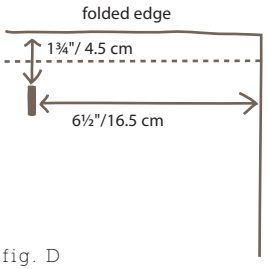


fig. D

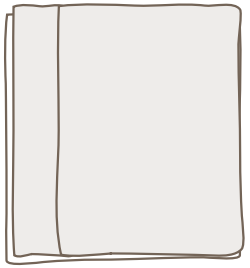


fig. E

STEP 3: SEW APPLIQUÉ SHAPES.

Set your sewing machine to a blind hem stitch. You do not need to use a special presser foot for this project. If your machine does not have a blind hem stitch, a narrow zigzag stitch will suffice. Use clear thread for the top thread and a matching thread for your bobbin thread. Pin the largest appliqué piece in the center of the pillow front piece and sew around the outside and inside of the square. Repeat with the smaller two pieces. See figure B.

STEP 4: SEW BACK OPENING.

With one of the pillow back pieces, press the edge of the longer side under toward the wrong side of the fabric by ¼"/6 mm, then again by ⅝"/16 mm. See figure C. Repeat for the other piece. Topstitch ½"/12 mm from the fold.

QUICK TIP: If you are using a lighter-weight fabric, you might want to use a square of heavy-duty fusible interfacing behind your buttonholes to add stability.

STEP 5: SEW BUTTONHOLES.

On the smaller back piece, mark the position for your two buttonholes with a fabric marker 6½"/16.5 cm from each edge and 1¾"/4.5 cm down from the finished seam, as indicated in figure D. This mark will be the top of the buttonhole, which will be approximately ⅛"/3 mm wider than your button. Following the instructions in your sewing machine manual, sew the buttonholes perpendicular to the edge of the seam. Cut open the slits in the buttonholes.

QUICK TIP: To cut open a slit in a buttonhole, fold the buttonhole in half vertically and cut the slit with small, sharp scissors. Alternately, you can carefully use a seam ripper with a straight pin in place at the top to make sure that you don't cut beyond your buttonhole.

STEP 6: PUT IT TOGETHER.

Stack the pieces in the following order: front piece right side up, smaller back piece (with buttonholes) right side down, larger back piece right side down, as pictured in figure E. The right sides should be facing one another and the edges should meet. Pin in place. Starting ½"/12 mm from the corner, sew the seams along all four sides, pivoting the needle ½"/12 mm from the edge as you turn each corner. Trim the excess fabric and clip the corners.

STEP 7: FINISH AND SEW BUTTONS.

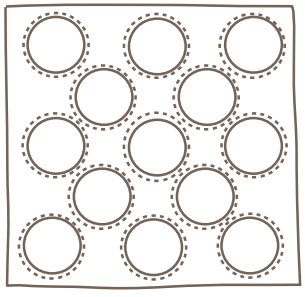
Turn the pillow right sides out and push out the corners with a chopstick. Use a fabric marker to mark the button positions on the fabric behind the buttonholes. Sew the buttons in place on your marks. Insert the pillow form and button closed.

CIRCLES FLOOR PILLOW

Modern design meets homespun flavor in this large floor pillow, which highlights circles of pattern surrounded by hand-embroidery stitches. In this project, you'll try the reverse appliqué technique, which can be hand stitched or machine sewn. The circles are contrasted with vintage fabrics against a neutral background. You'll also attach a hook and loop fastener, which will keep the back securely fastened.

OPTIONS

- This pillow would also work as a European sham for a bed or an oversize sofa pillow.
- Use a white background with bright solid colors for a different look.
- Turn this design into a memory wall hanging using old baby clothes for the appliqué shapes.
- Try one large circle or many smaller circles.
- Once you master this technique, you can use multiple layers of fabric revealed layer by layer in concentric circles.
- A variety of fabrics can be used for the pillow cover including canvas, upholstery fabric, linen, or felt.



SUPPLIES

1½ yd/1.5 m linen and cotton blend fabric

Thirteen 6"-x-6"/15-cm-x-15-cm fabric scraps for appliqué

Fabric marker

Clear tape (optional)

Basting fabric glue (optional)

Cotton embroidery floss (optional)

Embroidery needle (optional)

Embroidery hoop (optional)

Matching thread

24"/60 cm ¾"/2-cm-wide (Velcro) hook and loop fastener

Chopstick

24"/60 cm square pillow form

Seam allowance: ½"/12 mm

MULTIPLY YOUR SKILLS:
reverse appliqué (see how-to), embroidery running stitch (see page 161), hook and loop fastener

FINISHED DIMENSIONS:
24" x 24"/60 cm x 60 cm

STEP 1: CUT FABRIC.

Cut the main fabric according to the following dimensions:

25" x 25"/63.5 cm x 63.5 cm
19" x 25"/48 cm x 63.5 cm
9" x 25"/23 cm x 63.5 cm

Cut out both of the Circles Floor Pillow templates from the pattern sheet included with this book. Cut 13 circles of the scrap fabric according to the larger circle template.

STEP 2: DRAW CIRCLES.

Make a grid for the circle layout on the pillow front piece, according to figure A. You can draw the grid directly onto the fabric with a fabric marker, or mark the center lines with clear tape. Start your grid ½"/12 mm from the edge in order to center your circles within the 24" x 24"/60 cm x 60 cm finished dimensions. Use a fabric marker to trace the outline of the smaller circle template across the grid, as shown in figure A.

QUICK TIP: It's helpful to fold the circle template in half, then half again and snip a hole in the center so you can more clearly see the circle alignment.

STEP 3: SEW APPLIQUÉ CIRCLE.

Use basting fabric glue or pins to attach the fabric circles to the back of your pillow front piece behind each marked circle. If necessary, hold your fabric up to the light to make sure you are getting the circles centered. Follow the how-to instructions on the facing page for reverse appliqué with raw edges.

QUICK TIP: If your pillow will endure a lot of wear and tear, you may want to machine stitch around each circle before you add the hand embroidery.

STEP 4: SEW BACK CLOSURE.

With one of the back fabric pieces, press the edge of the longer side under toward the wrong side of the fabric by ¼"/6 mm, then again by ⅝"/16 mm. See figure B. Repeat for one long side of the other piece. You will sew down the seam in the next step as you attach the hook and loop fastener.

STEP 5: SEW HOOK AND LOOP FASTENER.

Make sure your bobbin thread matches your pillow fabric before beginning this step. Pin the looped piece of your Velcro fastener to the wrong side of the larger back pillow piece. See figure C. Sew along the edges of the Velcro using a straight stitch. Pin the hooked piece of the Velcro fastener to the right side of the smaller piece and sew it in place as well.

STEP 6: PUT IT TOGETHER.

Fasten the two back pieces to one another using the Velcro fastener. Pin the back to the front, with right sides facing. Starting ½"/12 mm from one of the corners, sew seams along all four sides, pivoting the needle ½"/12 mm from the edge as you turn each corner. Trim the corners.

STEP 7: TURN RIGHT SIDES OUT.

Turn the pillow cover right sides out and push out the corners with a chopstick. Insert the pillow form.

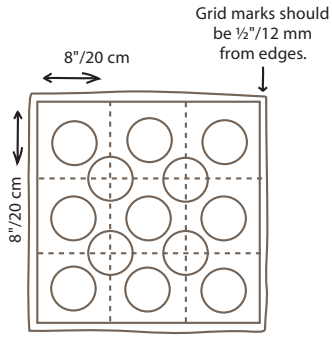


fig. A

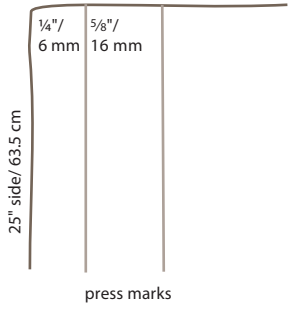


fig. B

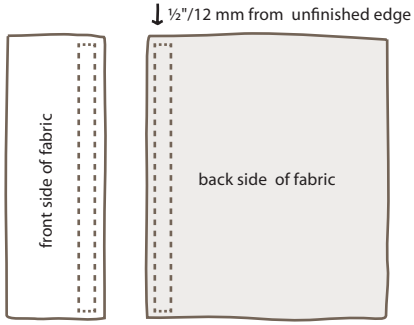


fig. C

How-to: Reverse Appliqué

Reverse appliqué is a technique that can be used as an embellishment in quilting or on clothing, or added to accessories. By simply attaching a secondary fabric to the back side of your main fabric and cutting out your shape, you will create a textural appliqué design. You can press your edges under and sew the outside of the appliqué by hand, or leave the edges raw and sew by hand or machine for a handmade look. These instructions are for raw-edge appliqué as seen in the Circles Floor Pillow project. Appliqué scissors have a rounded tip and are helpful for this technique, but not required.

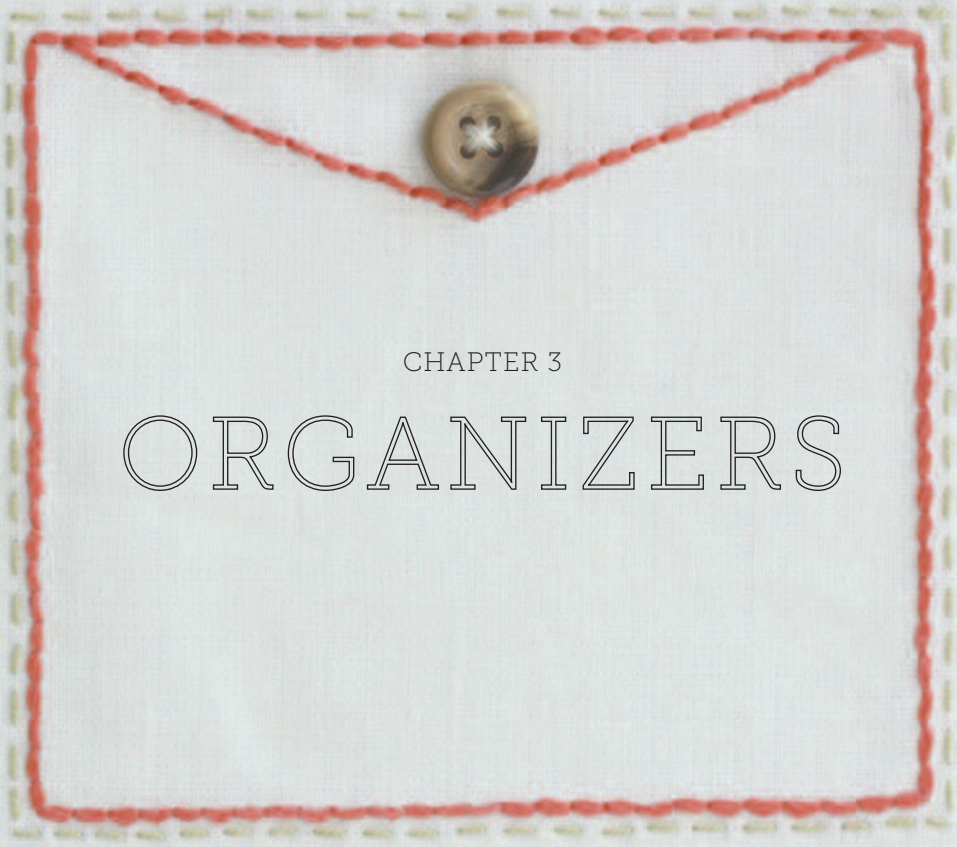
1 Using a fabric marker or pencil, draw or trace your appliqué design onto the front of your fabric.

2 Pin your secondary fabric to the back of your main fabric, making sure that the secondary fabric is at least ½"/12 mm larger than the appliqué area. Sometimes it is helpful to use a temporary basting fabric glue to hold the fabric in place; just apply a few small dots to your backing fabric.

3 Sew by machine or by hand with embroidery floss around your appliqué design as marked. If you are sewing by hand, you may want to place your fabric in an embroidery hoop to stabilize the fabric as you work.

4 With a small pair of sharp scissors, pull up the main fabric and cut a small hole in the center of the design, being careful not to cut the fabric underneath. With appliqué scissors, continue to pull up the main fabric and place one hand in the back while you cut inside the shape, leaving at least ¼"/6 mm from the stitching. Again, be careful not to cut into your backing fabric.

FABRIC



CHAPTER 3

ORGANIZERS

Here are some projects to help you get organized while learning to work with canvas and interfacing. The pencil holder folds over and buttons up, making it easy to grab on the go—it's perfect for artists of all ages. Take your construction skills a step further with the essential storage cube, which incorporates interfacing and fabric handles. This can be made with your favorite fabrics to work with your décor, and its versatility allows you to carry it around the house, store it, or take it on car trips. The craft caddy builds on your skills with its three dividers, handles, and front pocket. Once you've tackled these three projects, you can make your own variations to suit your storage needs.

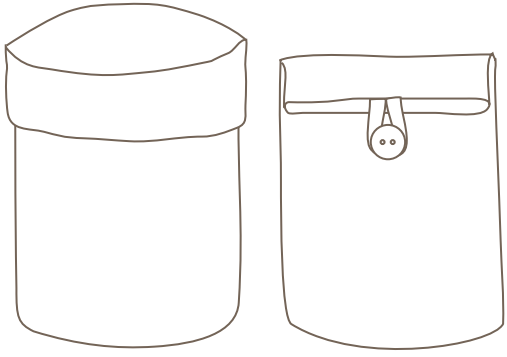
PENCIL HOLDER

Fabric designed by Sarah Neuburger

This handy pencil holder folds down and closes with a button and elastic loop so you can take it with you. Best of all, there's no need to dump all the pencils out to look for a certain color; just fold down the top and you have a standing container with all the pencils in full view! Made with canvas outer and lining, this project can be washed if needed.

OPTIONS

- Make this in a smaller version to hold snacks on the go, or make a larger version to use as a cosmetics bag or as storage for puzzle pieces or toys.
- Add a Velcro closure at the top if you need it to store small items.
- To embellish, add handles, embroider a child's name, or add a stamped or appliquéd design.



SUPPLIES

18" x 22"/46 cm x 56 cm (fat quarter) outer canvas

18" x 22"/46 cm x 56 cm (fat quarter) lining canvas

5"/12-cm strip of ¼"-/6-mm-wide elastic

Matching thread

¾"-/2-cm-diameter button

NOTE: If using lightweight fabrics, you will need to add interfacing (see page 163).

Seam allowance: as noted in project steps

MULTIPLY YOUR SKILLS:
circular bottom construction, button and elastic loop closure

FINISHED DIMENSIONS:
8¾" x 7"/22 cm x 17 cm

STEP 1: CUT FABRIC.

Cut one each of the outer and lining fabrics to 15" x 9½"/38 cm x 24 cm. Cut out the Pencil Holder template from the pattern sheet included with this book and cut one circle from each fabric.

QUICK TIP: To adjust the size of the pencil holder, cut out a circle the size you'd like for your base. Then measure the diameter of the circle and multiply this number by π (3.14), then add your seam allowance. This will give you the width of fabric needed to wrap around the circular base.

STEP 2: SEW OUTER PIECE AND LINING.

Fold the outer piece of fabric in half widthwise, with right sides facing. Sew along the 9½"/24-cm side with a ½"/12-mm seam allowance, forming a fabric tube. See figure A. Repeat with the lining piece. Trim excess fabric and press both seams open.

STEP 3: ATTACH CIRCULAR BASE.

With the outer fabric still wrong sides out, pin the bottom circle around with right sides facing into the cylinder. Sew around with a ¼"/6-mm seam allowance. See figure B. Follow with an overcasting or zigzag stitch. Repeat with the lining.

QUICK TIP: When sewing a circle, it is helpful to work slowly, pausing often with the needle down to readjust the fabric.

STEP 4: BASTE ELASTIC LOOP TO OUTER BAG.

Form a loop with the elastic and baste it to the top right sides of the outer fabric, 3½"/9 cm from the side seam. See figure C.

STEP 5: SEW BAGS TOGETHER.

Turn the outer piece right sides out and insert it into the lining (still wrong sides out), so that right sides are together. Tuck the elastic loop down tubes between the layers, making sure it is flat and not twisted. Match the side seams and pin around the top. Sew around with a ½"/12-mm seam allowance, leaving a 4"/10-cm opening.

STEP 6: TURN OUT AND EDGE STITCH.

Pull the pouch right sides out through the top opening. Push the lining into the pouch and press the seam flat. Then change your bobbin thread to match the fabric and edge stitch around the top.

STEP 7: SEW BUTTON.

With the elastic loop on the back side of the pencil holder, press the opening flat and fold the top of the pouch over about 1½"/4 cm (the seam will be to one side). Mark where the elastic loop falls on the front of the pouch and sew the button into position. See figure D.

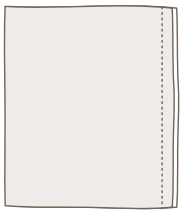


fig. A

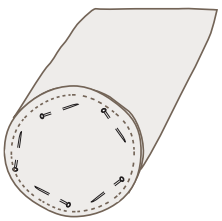


fig. B

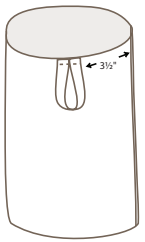


fig. C

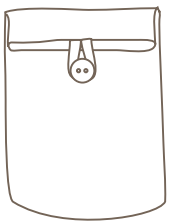


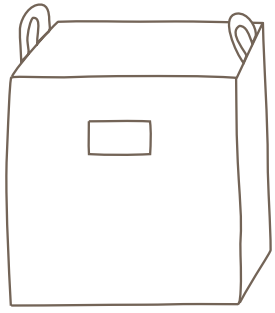
fig. D

STORAGE CUBE

This roomy storage cube will help you get organized—or at least get things out of the way until you can get to it. It is the perfect size for holding toys, fabric, magazines, shoes, or sweaters. The handles allow you to take it from room to room with ease. You will use heavy-weight interfacing for this project, making this storage cube nice and sturdy. The simple stamped balsa wood label adds textural interest and will help you keep track of what's inside.

OPTIONS

- Make this cube just about any size you need.
- Add extra details such as pockets, longer handles, stamped sewing tape labels, or a clear window for viewing the contents of the box.
- Make a series of these boxes in different fabrics to brighten up a bookshelf or to organize a closet.



SUPPLIES

FOR CUBE

5/8 yd/55 cm outer canvas

5/8 yd/55 cm lining canvas

1 yd/1 m heavy-weight sew-in interfacing

Chopstick

Matching thread

Fabric marker or tailor's chalk

FOR BALSA WOOD LABEL

One 4"-/10-cm-wide balsa wood sheet

Craft knife

Cutting mat

Sandpaper

Awl, pencil, or other sharp object

Letter stamps

Stamp pad

Twine

Tapestry needle

Seam allowance: ½"/12 mm, except where noted

MULTIPLY YOUR SKILLS:
heavy-weight interfacing, fabric handles, box construction

FINISHED DIMENSIONS:
9" x 9" x 9"/23 cm x 23 cm x 23 cm

STEP 1: MAKE BALSA WOOD LABEL.

With the craft knife on the cutting mat, cut the balsa wood to 2" x 4"/5 cm x 10 cm, with the grain running lengthwise. (Note: It might be necessary to cut the balsa wood to a larger width if you are stamping a long word.) Sand down any rough edges. With an awl or a pencil, mark two holes at either end, centered and approximately ½"/12 mm from the sides. Using the awl or pencil, gently poke holes through the wood at your marks. Stamp the letters in the center and set the balsa wood aside for a later step.

STEP 2: CUT FABRIC.

Cut the fabric according to the following dimensions:

Outer canvas sides and bottom:
10" x 10"/25 cm x 25 cm (cut 5)

Outer canvas handles:
9" x 4 ½"/23 cm x 11 cm (cut 2)

Lining canvas sides and bottom:
10" x 10"/25 cm x 25 cm (cut 5)

Interfacing sides and bottom:
10" x 10"/25 cm x 25 cm (cut 5)

STEP 3: MAKE HANDLES.

Fold one handle piece in half lengthwise, right sides together, and press in place. Sew along the raw edges, as shown in figure A. Turn right sides out, using a chopstick to help you push the fabric out. Repeat for the other handle. Press both pieces flat with the seam on one side.

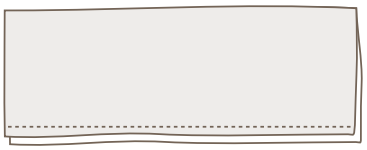


fig. A

STEP 4: SEW LINING SIDES.

Baste the interfacing pieces to the wrong sides of all five lining pieces, with your stitches ¼"/6 mm from the edge. (Each interfacing and lining piece will now function as one piece.) Next, sew one piece to another, right sides together, stopping ½"/12 mm from the bottom to leave room for the bottom seam. It's helpful to mark this point with a fabric marker. See figure B. Sew another side to the last one, again stopping ½"/12 mm from the bottom. Continue until four sides of lining fabric with interfacing are sewn together, forming the shape of the cube without a bottom. See figure C. Press open the side seams.

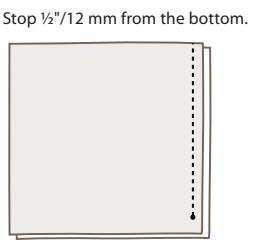


fig. B

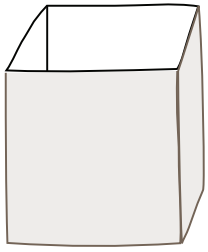


fig. C

FABRIC

STEP 5: SEW LINING BOTTOM.

With the remaining lining fabric square, pin one side of the square to a bottom side of the cube piece with right sides facing each other. Starting ½"/12 mm from the edge, stitch to within ½"/12 mm from the other side, as shown in figure D. Backstitch at the end of this side. The stitches on the bottom should meet the side seam stitches to avoid gaps in the corners. Sew the next side, *leaving a 6"/15-cm opening to turn the cube right sides out,* then continue stitching the other sides until you have attached all four sides of the base. Reinforce the bottom corners with a straight stitch across to provide extra stability, then trim the excess fabric.

STEP 6: SEW OUTER SIDES AND BOTTOM.

Repeat steps 4 and 5 with the outer fabric, but this time do *not* leave an opening in the base.

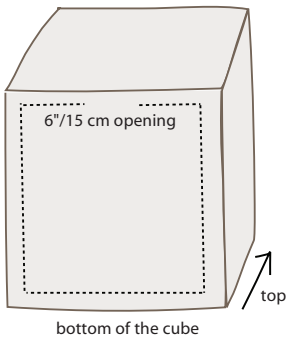


fig. D

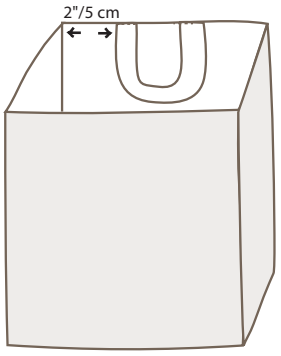


fig. E

STEP 7: BASTE HANDLES.

Center one handle along one side of the outer cube with right sides facing and raw edges aligned, 2"/5 cm from the corners, as shown in figure E. Stitch ¼"/6 mm from the edge. Repeat with the other handle on the opposite side.

STEP 8: SEW OUTER CUBE AND LINING TOGETHER.

Turn the lining right sides out and leave the outer cube wrong sides out. Insert the lining into the outer cube so that right sides are facing, with the handles facing down between the layers. Align the corner seams and pin in place. See figure F. Sew along the raw edges at the rim with a ½"/12-mm seam allowance.

STEP 9: TURN OUT AND EDGE STITCH.

Carefully turn the cube right sides out through the opening in the lining. Push out all corners with the chopstick. Press flat along the seam where the lining and outer fabric meet. Push the lining into the outer fabric and shape it into a cube. Press again along the top seam. With bobbin thread matching the outer cube, edge stitch around the top.

STEP 10: ATTACH BALSA WOOD LABEL.

With the tapestry needle threaded with twine, sew the balsa wood label onto the storage cube, centered on one side approximately 3"/8 mm from the top edge.

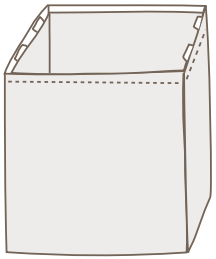


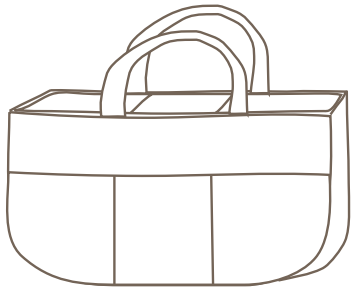
fig. F

CRAFT CADDY

This versatile caddy will keep all of your crafting supplies organized, whether you are crafting around the house or on the go. The roomy interior with dividers provides ample space for fabric, balls of yarn, embroidery supplies, or whatever else you need to store. The outside pockets are ideal for the little things that you need to access quickly. This bag builds on the basic box shape, but with a more challenging construction method including the many fabric pieces of the dividers, lining, and outside pocket.

OPTIONS

- Use this caddy to hold fix-it tools for the house, knitting supplies, or gardening tools.
- Fill up the caddy with creative goodies to make a thoughtful gift.
- Leave off the straps to use it as a simple storage bin.
- If you don't need dividers, use the dimensions of the exterior and make a simple liner.



SUPPLIES

1 yd/1 m outer canvas

1 yd/1 m lining canvas

½ yd/50 cm ultra heavy-weight fusible interfacing

1 yd/1 m 1½"-/4-cm-wide cotton webbing for straps

Matching thread

Fabric marker

Seam allowance: ½"/12 mm, except where noted

MULTIPLY YOUR SKILLS:
more complex bag construction, dividers, pockets, handles

FINISHED DIMENSIONS:
13½" x 9" x 8"/
34 cm x 23 cm x 20 cm

STEP 1: CUT FABRIC.

Cut out the five Craft Caddy templates from the pattern sheet included with this book. Cut the fabric and interfacing according to the following dimensions (when finished, you should have a total of 16 cut pieces including interfacing).

Outer canvas:
Front and back (cut 2 from template)
Pocket (cut 1 from template)
Bottom: 8" x 30"/20 cm x 76 cm

Lining canvas:
Left sides (cut 2 from template)
Right sides (cut 2 from template)
Center (cut 2 from template)
Side bottom pieces: 8" x 13½"/20 cm x 34 cm (cut 2)
Center bottom piece: 8" x 5½"/20 cm x 14 cm
Dividers: 8" x 16"/20 cm x 40.5 cm (cut 2)

Ultra heavy-weight fusible interfacing: 8" x 30"/20 cm x 76 cm

Cotton webbing for straps: 18"/46 cm lengths (cut 2)

STEP 2: SEW POCKET.

Press down the top raw edge of the pocket piece by ¼"/6 mm toward the wrong side of the fabric. Fold and press again, this time folding by ½"/12 mm. Stitch on the right side of the fabric along this fold to form a hem, stitching approximately ⅜"/1 cm from the edge. Edge stitch to create a second row of stitches. Pin the pocket to the canvas front piece and stay stitch along the bottom edges, ⅛"/3 mm from the edge. Then, draw lines with a fabric marker on the pocket to mark the pocket dividers, 5¼"/13 cm from each side. Stitch down the marked lines, forming the pocket dividers. See figure A.

STEP 3: SEW OUTER BAG TOGETHER.

Fuse the interfacing to the wrong side of the 8"-x-30"/20-cm-x-76-cm bottom piece. Stay stitch ¼"/6 mm along both long sides of this piece. Notch these sides up to the ¼"/6-mm stay stitching, which will help ease the fabric as you sew along the curves. Pin one side of the bottom piece to the front piece, right sides together, as shown in figure B. Sew the pieces together with a ½"/12-mm seam allowance. Repeat by pinning the back piece along the bottom strip, again right sides facing. Sew together. Turn the bag right sides out.

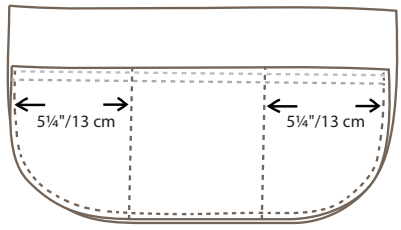


fig. A

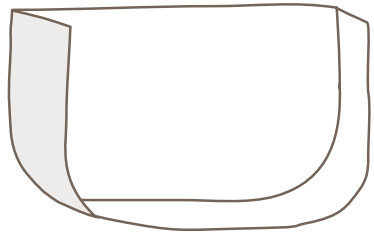


fig. B

STEP 4: MAKE DIVIDERS.

Fold one divider piece in half widthwise, with wrong sides together, forming an 8"/20-cm square. Press along the fold. Repeat with the other divider piece. With one of the side lining pieces (with the curve at the bottom), pin a divider along the side with right sides facing and bottom edges aligned. Sew along this edge with a ½"/12-mm seam allowance, stopping ½"/12 mm from the bottom, as shown in figure C. The side lining piece will extend about 1½"/4 cm from the top of the divider. Next, sew the same divider to the opposite side lining piece. You should then have a piece that looks like figure D. Repeat this process for the divider section that will be at the other end of the caddy.

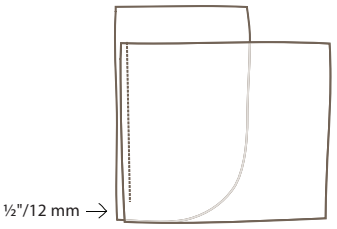


fig. C

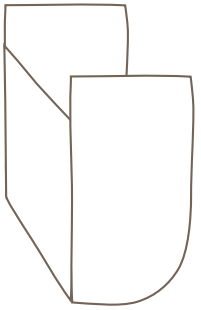


fig. D

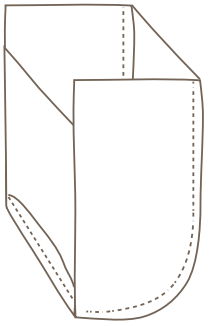


fig. E

STEP 5: SEW SIDE BOTTOM PIECES.

Next, you will add a bottom to the side pieces that you just made. Pin one side bottom piece (8" x 13½"/20 cm x 34 cm) along the side of a divider section. The divider should still be open as two pieces at the bottom. *Pin the non-facing side of the divider out of the way so that it won't be stitched as you sew along the bottom.* Sew along the pinned edges, pivoting your needle ½"/12 mm at the bottom corners. See figure E. Repeat this step for the other divider section. If there is any excess fabric extending beyond the top raw edge, trim it straight across.

STEP 6: CONNECT DIVIDER SECTIONS.

In this step, you will connect the center piece (5½" x 9½"/14 cm x 24 cm) to the side rounded divider sections, as shown in figure F. Sew the right sides together, stopping ½"/12 mm from the bottom. Then repeat for the other side center piece. When finished, the lining with dividers will almost be

complete except for the center bottom piece. The center bottom piece (8" x 5½"/20 cm x 14 cm) will now be sewn to the sides of your dividers that you pinned out of the way in step 5. Pin and sew this piece to the bottom, beginning the corner stitches where the side seams ended.

STEP 7: BASTE STRAPS TO OUTER BAG.

Position one 18"/46-cm strap centered on the front of the bag 3" from either side, as shown in figure G. Sew in place, approximately ⅛"/3 mm from the edge. Repeat for the other strap on the opposite side of the bag.

STEP 8: SEW OUTER BAG TO LINING.

With lining wrong sides out and outer bag right sides out, insert the lining into the outer bag (wrong sides will be facing). Fold around the top edges, folding both the fabric and lining down ½"/12 mm toward the wrong side of the fabric, pinning as you go. This will flip the straps up into the correct position. Edge stitch around the perimeter, ⅜"/1 cm from the edge. See figure H. Then edge stitch again ⅛"/3 mm from the edge.

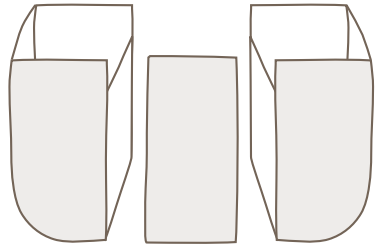


fig. F

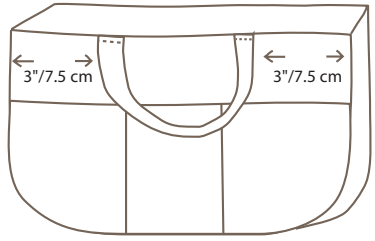


fig. G

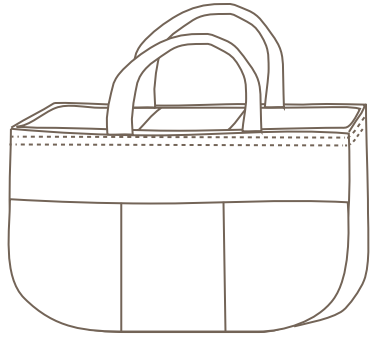
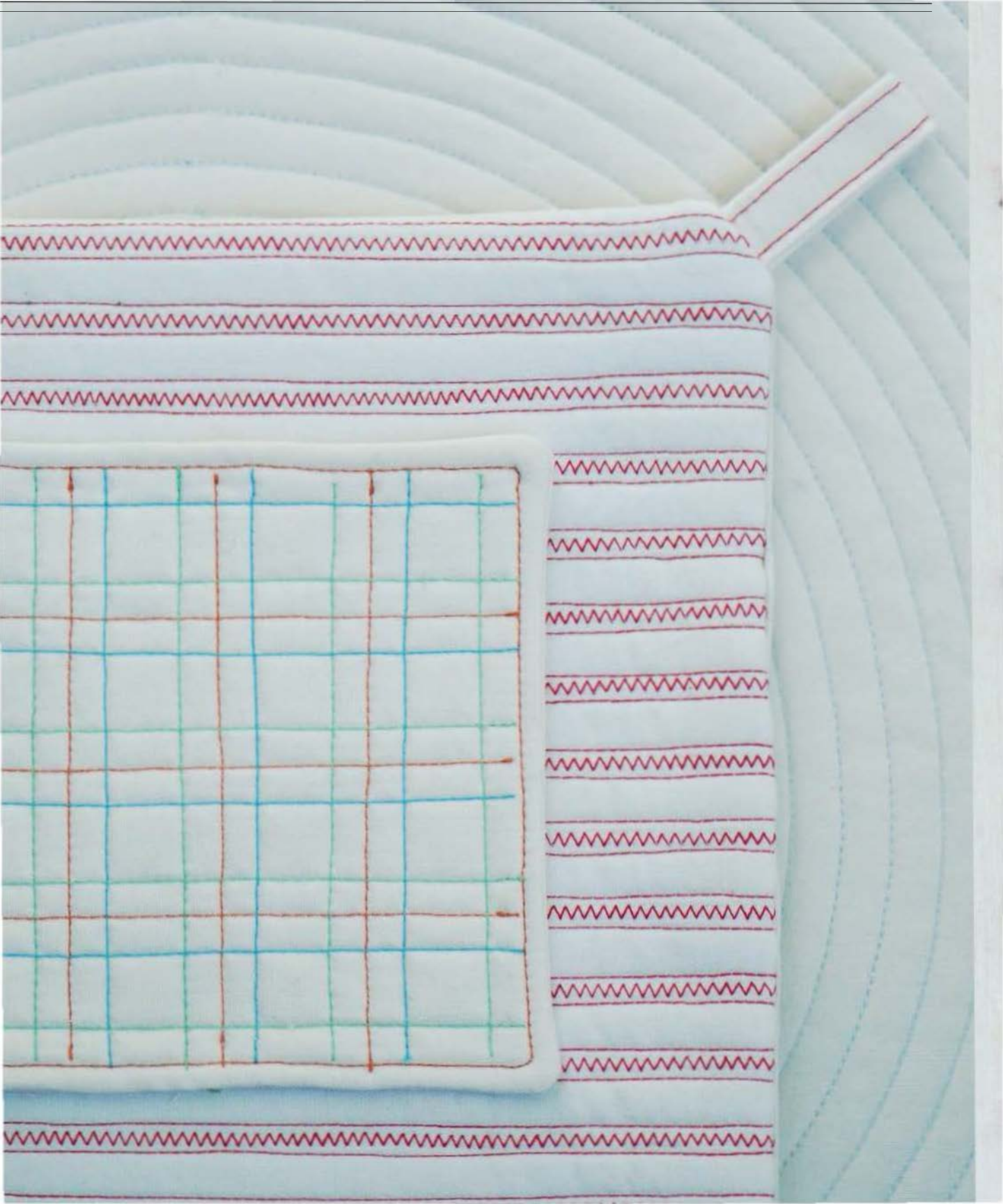


fig. H



CHAPTER 4

QUILTED KITCHEN

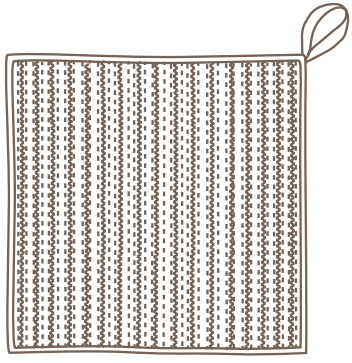
Quilting isn't just for the bedroom anymore; the projects in this chapter add a bit of modern inspiration to this traditional art form. Rather than patchwork, these projects rely on the thread to add design interest. You'll start with a hot pad featuring a ticking stripe stitched design. This insulated hot pad includes a pocket in the back to slip your hand into when grabbing your latest creation from the oven. Next, take your stitching skills a step further with coasters quilted in three thread colors, echoing the look of plaid. The final project in this chapter is a set of stitched place mats with a modern rippled design, sewn with a simple technique. In this chapter, you'll learn basic quilting techniques with increasingly complex stitch designs, as well as how to sew simple binding by machine.

TICKING STRIPE HOT PAD

Learn basic quilting techniques with this hot pad project. You will create the simple, classic look of ticking stripes with your machine stitching. To add extra functionality, the hot pad features a back pocket where you can put your hand to grab hot pans from the oven and a hook to hang it up when not in use.

OPTIONS

- Quilt the top in another way or not at all.
- Leave off the loop and pocket for a simple trivet.
- Skip the stitching and have your kids draw on the fabric and make a one-of-a-kind hot pad grandparents will treasure.
- Try different colors of thread to brighten it up, or use tone on tone to highlight the texture.
- Take it a step further and add binding to the edge of this hot pad to finish it off.



SUPPLIES

18" x 22"/46 cm x 56 cm (fat quarter) cotton fabric

¼ yd/25 cm thick quilt batting or insulated lining

Matching thread

Red cotton thread

Fabric marker or tailor's chalk

Chopstick

MULTIPLY YOUR SKILLS:
basic quilting, ladder stitch (see how-to), batting

FINISHED DIMENSIONS:
7½" x 7½"/18 cm x 18 cm

STEP 1. CUT FABRIC.

Cut the fabric according to the following dimensions:

Cotton:
8½" x 8½"/21.5 cm x 21.5 cm (cut 2)
8½" x 13"/21.5 cm x 33 cm
5" x 2"/12 cm x 5 cm for loop

Batting:
9" x 9"/23 cm x 23 cm
6" x 7"/15 cm x 17 cm

STEP 2. MAKE LOOP.

Fold and press each long side of the fabric loop piece ½"/12 mm toward the wrong side of the fabric. Fold in half lengthwise and press again. You will then have a ½"/12-mm folded strip. Pin in place if needed. Sew just at the edge on both sides to create two rows of stitching. Be sure to use red bobbin thread.

STEP 3. QUILT TOP.

Place one larger piece of fabric on top of the larger piece of batting and pin it in place (you will just be quilting through this top layer and the batting; set aside the other fabric piece for now). With a fabric marker, draw lines every ½"/12 mm across the fabric, starting ¾"/2 cm from the edge of your fabric. Sew over these lines with a narrow zigzag stitch, gently smoothing the fabric as you sew. See figure A. Once you have sewn all of your zigzag stitches, begin to sew straight stitches just to the right of each zigzag line, using your presser foot as a gauge for consistency. See figure B. Turn the fabric with batting 180 degrees and continue to sew on the right sides until all straight stitches are done. See figure C. Trim any excess fabric batting.

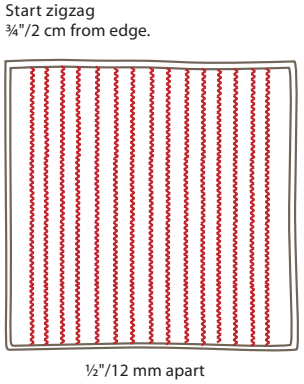


fig. A

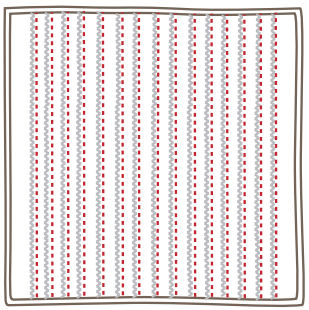


fig. B

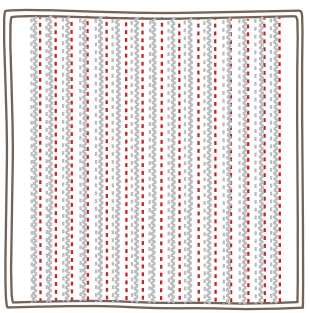


fig. C

STEP 4. MAKE POCKET.

Fold the 8½"-x-13"/21.5-cm-x-33-cm piece of fabric in half by the width and press at the fold. Insert the smaller batting piece, centered between the layers, and pin it in place.

STEP 5. PUT IT TOGETHER.

Press all of your pieces and change your thread to match your fabric color. Stack your fabric pieces in the following order: front piece right side up (quilted together with batting), loop pinned in upper left corner with raw edge facing out as shown in figure D; pocket piece right side down and even with the bottom edge; and finally the back fabric layer right side down. Sew around the edges with a ½"/12-mm seam allowance, leaving a 4"/10-cm opening for turning as shown in figure D.

STEP 6. TRIM AND FINISH.

Trim the edges to ¼"/6 mm and clip the corners. Turn the hot pad right sides out so that the pocket is on the back side. Push out the corners with a chopstick. Pin the remaining opening closed and hand sew using the ladder stitch (see how-to).

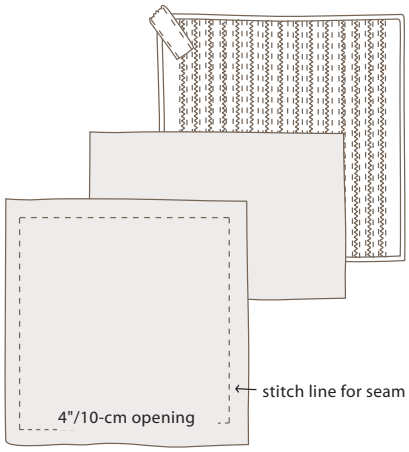


fig. D

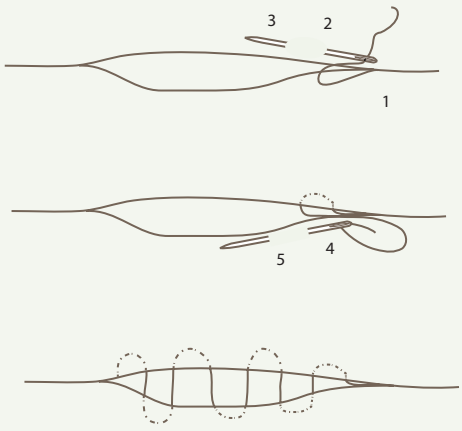
How-to: Ladder Stitch

A ladder stitch allows you to sew a seam closed by hand with an almost invisible stitch.

1 Thread a needle and tie a knot at the end of your thread. From the back side of the fabric, insert the needle, pulling it through to hide the knot.

2 Following the stitch order illustrated below, stitch into your fabric, pulling the needle back out after you take a 1/8"/3-mm stitch. Insert your needle into the other side and make another 1/8"/3-mm stitch under the fabric. Continue until you have closed the opening.

3 Tie a knot by forming a loop with your thread and pulling the needle through the loop. Pull through twice and then insert the needle into the fabric and pull it out a few inches along the seam line, clipping off the excess and leaving the tail inside the fabric.

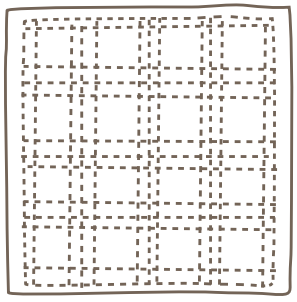


PLAID COASTERS

Take your quilting skills a step further by incorporating intermediate quilting techniques to create these plaid coasters that are perfect for picnic-style entertaining or a formal dinner with family. They also make for a unique housewarming gift. These coasters are made with simple ivory cotton, making the thread the star of the show.

OPTIONS

- Use this basic design for coasters without the quilting to make plain coasters with your favorite fabrics.
- Try different fabric and thread color combinations to create different looks with the plaid design. A tone-on-tone color scheme would highlight the textural quality and create a grid design. Or you could try these in holiday colors as gifts for family and friends.
- Increase the dimensions to make a trivet or place mats. Or stitch the design by hand for a homespun look.



SUPPLIES
FOR 4 COASTERS

18" x 22"/46 cm x 56 cm (fat quarter) cotton fabric

11" x 11"/28 cm x 28 cm quilt batting

Thread in 3 colors

Chopstick

Fabric marker

Seam allowance: ½"/12 mm

MULTIPLY YOUR SKILLS:
intermediate quilting

FINISHED DIMENSIONS:
4½" x 4½"/11.5 cm x 11.5 cm

STEP 1: CUT FABRIC.

Cut the fabric into eight 5½"/14-cm squares. Cut four pieces of batting the same size.

STEP 2: PUT IT TOGETHER.

Stack two squares of fabric right sides together with a layer of batting on top. Pin and sew around the perimeter with a ½"/12-mm seam allowance, leaving a 2½"/6.5-cm opening at the bottom. See figure A. Trim edges to ¼"/6 mm and clip the excess fabric at the corners. Turn right sides out, with the batting inside, and poke out the corners with a chopstick. Press again. You will sew together the opening in the next step. Repeat for a total of four coasters.

fig. A

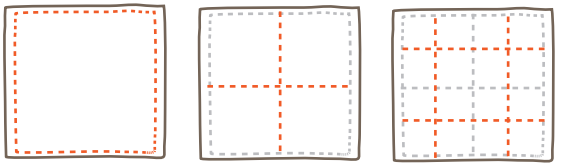


fig. B

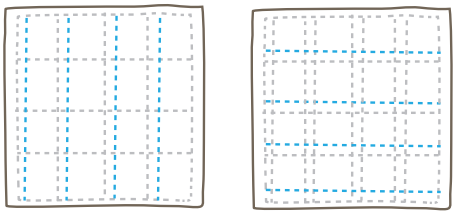


fig. C

STEP 3: QUILT WITH FIRST COLOR.

With your first thread color and matching bobbin thread, sew around the perimeter approximately ⅛"/3 mm from the edge. Remove the coaster from the machine and draw the grid with a fabric marker, as shown in the center diagram of figure B. First, sew down the center line in one direction, gently pulling the fabric taut as you sew. You will need to use a back-tack (locking stitch) when quilting the coaster top to lock your stitches in place. End your stitches at the outside stitch line. Then turn the coaster 90 degrees and sew in the other direction. Next, sew lines centered between your previous stitches, as shown in the last diagram of figure B. You may want to mark these lines with a fabric marker prior to sewing. Repeat this sewn grid for all four coasters.

STEP 4: QUILT WITH SECOND COLOR.

Using the second thread color as the top and bobbin threads, sew stitches ¼"/6 mm to the right of your first stitched lines. Then repeat until you have four lines of stitches in one direction. Rotate the coaster 90 degrees and repeat. See figure C. Repeat this step for all four coasters.

STEP 5: QUILT WITH THIRD COLOR.

For the third color, sew ¼"/6 mm on the opposite side of your second color stitching, rotate 90 degrees again, and make four more stitch lines. See figure D. Repeat this step for all four coasters.

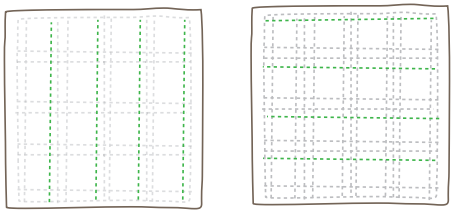


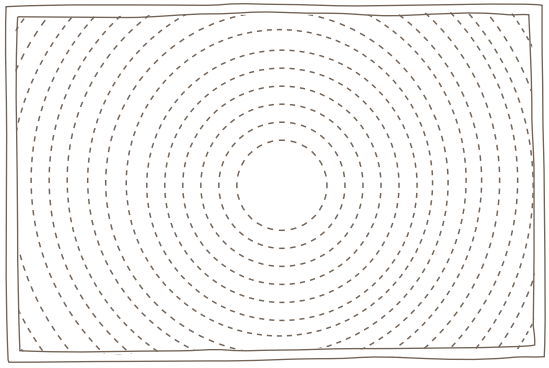
fig. D

RIPPLED PLACE MATS

If you like to sew and sew, this is the project for you with repeated concentric circles sewn to form a rippled design. The tone-on-tone effect of the stitching brings out the texture. With this project, you will get more practice with quilting, and use a simple technique for making the circles. Plus, you'll learn how to use a simplified machine binding technique to finish off the edges.

OPTIONS

- Use this simple pattern to make any type of place mats you'd like.
- Do the quilting in different thread colors with your choice of fabric to create varied effects.
- Try hand stitching or using some of the appliqué techniques from the Pillows chapter (page 23) to create the circles and lines.
- Skip the binding and sew this project together using the same method used for the coasters in the previous project and just quilt on the top.
- The binding for this project is extra narrow; try making it wider if that's your preference.



SUPPLIES
FOR 4 PLACE MATS

2 yd/2 m cotton fabric
2 yd/2 m quilt batting
Fabric marker
Cotton quilting thread
Self-healing cutting mat

MULTIPLY YOUR SKILLS:
intermediate to advanced quilting, single-fold machine binding
(see how-to)

FINISHED DIMENSIONS:
13" x 17"/33 cm x 43 cm

STEP 1: CUT FABRIC.

With fabric folded in half lengthwise, cut the fabric into 8 rectangles (14" x 18"/35.5 cm x 46 cm) and 9 strips (1½" x 18"/4 cm x 46 cm), according to figure A. The binding strips need to be joined in step 6 to create the length needed. Next, cut the batting into four rectangular pieces, 14" x 18"/35.5 cm x 46 cm each. Finally, cut out the Rippled Place Mats circle template from the pattern sheet included with this book.

STEP 2: LAYER FABRIC AND BATTING.

Layer two pieces of fabric *wrong sides facing* with the quilt batting in the center. Press and pin in place. Repeat for a total of four place mats.

STEP 3: TRACE CENTER CIRCLE.

Measure and find the center of the place mat and mark it. Fold the circle template into quarters and snip an opening in the center. Center the template over the center of the place mat and trace around the circle outline with a fabric marker to create the outline of your first circle. See figure B.

STEP 4: QUILT CIRCLES.

Begin quilting on this outline with a straight stitch, forming the center circle and smoothing the fabric as you go. Using your first stitched circle and the edge of your presser foot as a guide, make the next circle approximately ⅜"/1 cm from the first. Then repeat until you have covered the rectangle in circles as shown in figure C. You can make your circles closer or further apart if you'd like. Start slowly and build up speed as you become more comfortable with the circular stitching.

QUICK TIP: When sewing along curves, it's helpful to use a shorter stitch length.

STEP 5: TRIM EDGES.

The quilting may cause your place mat to become a bit misshapen. Place it on the cutting mat grid and square it up by trimming ½"/12 mm (or as needed) from each side to make sure that your corners are at right angles and your edges are straight.

STEP 6: ATTACH BINDING BY MACHINE.

Follow the how-to instructions for machine binding on the next page.

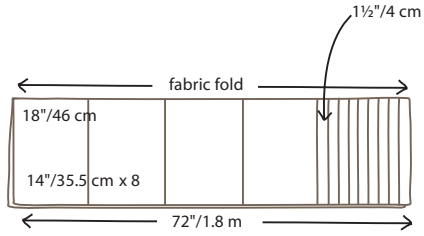
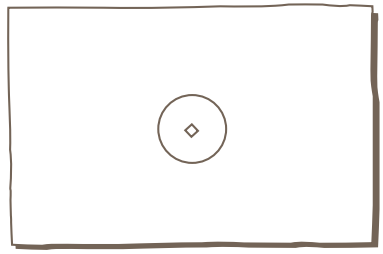


fig. A



Center template and trace around it.

fig. B

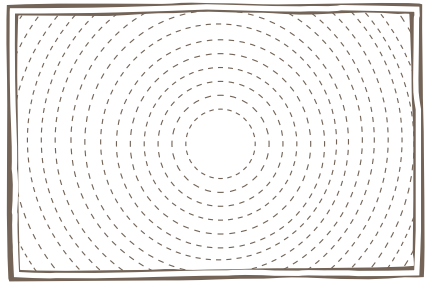


FIG. C

How-to: Single-Fold Machine Binding

Binding is used to finish the raw edges of quilted items. For added strength and durability, binding is often cut on the bias, or diagonal, to allow many threads to withstand the wear and tear that the edges often suffer. This is especially important for a quilt or an heirloom project, but for the place mat project, bias binding really isn't necessary and you can save fabric without sacrificing much strength by cutting along the cross grain, perpendicular to the selvedge. These instructions are for single-fold binding. See page 133 for double-fold binding instructions.

NOTE: The measurements used here are for the Rippled Place Mats project with a narrow ¼"/6-mm binding. If you are making a wider binding, you will need to adjust your measurements, taking into account the fold, seam allowance, and thickness of your batting.

1 Cut 1½"/4 cm strips perpendicular to the selvedge of the fabric. Your binding will need to be long enough to fit around your project, so you'll need about 65"/165 cm total length of binding. You will need to join smaller pieces to create the length needed, which you will do in the next step.

2 Join the smaller strips together by placing them right sides together, perpendicular to one another, and sewing at a 45-degree angle. See figure A. Open the joined pieces, press the seams open and trim the excess fabric.

3 Next, press along one side of the joined binding strip ¼"/6 mm toward the wrong side of the fabric.

4 Leaving a 3"/7.5-cm tail of fabric, begin to pin your binding strips to your fabric a few inches from a corner, right sides together. The raw edge of your binding will meet the raw edges of your quilted fabric. Begin sewing ¼"/6 mm from the edge. Continue to sew across until ¼"/6 mm before you reach a corner and back-tack here.

QUICK TIP: You might want to lay out your binding to make sure the joined seam doesn't fall in a corner, as this can make the corner bulky and can also decrease its strength.

5 Remove the place mat from the machine. Fold the binding strip straight up to form a 45-degree angle with the corner, and then fold it on top of itself straight down so that the fold meets the top edge of your corner. See figure B. Since you are working with single-fold binding, you should be able to feel where the fabric angle is (which should be ¼"/6 mm from the corner) and begin to sew there. If not, you can measure ¼"/6 mm from both sides and make a dot with a fabric marker.

6 Continue to sew around, repeating step 5 at each corner. Stop a few inches from the start of your binding. Lay the two binding ends together and mark a line with a fabric marker where they lay flat on the place mat. See figure C. With right sides facing, sew along this line and trim the excess to ¼"/6 mm. Continue to sew down the remainder of the binding.

7 Fold and press the folded edge of the binding around to the back side of the place mat, making sure the corners are neatly mitered. Change your bobbin thread to match your fabric. Beginning in a corner on the right side of the place mat, sew "in the ditch," or in the space between the body of the place mat and the fold of the binding. See figure D.

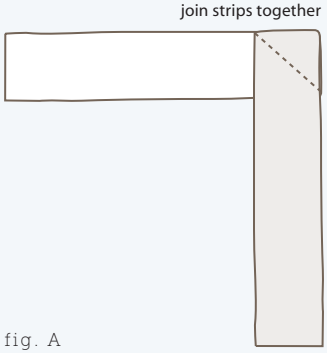
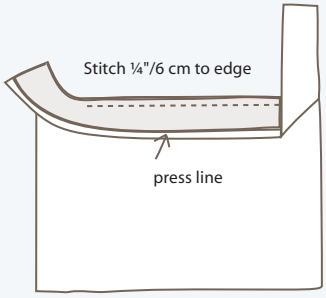
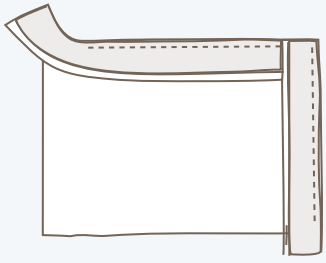


fig. A



Fold binding up at a
45 degree angle.



Then fold binding straight down on
top of itself, forming a corner.

fig. B

Lay flat and mark where edges meet.

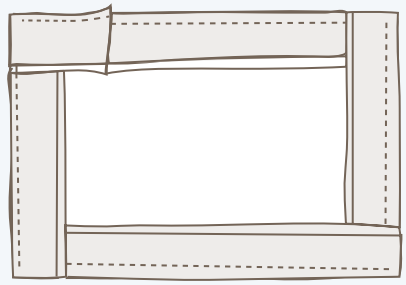


fig. C

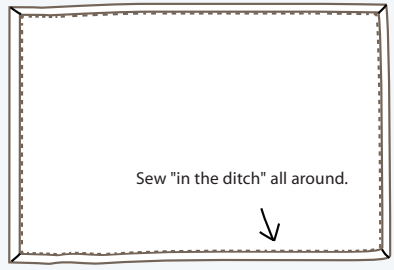
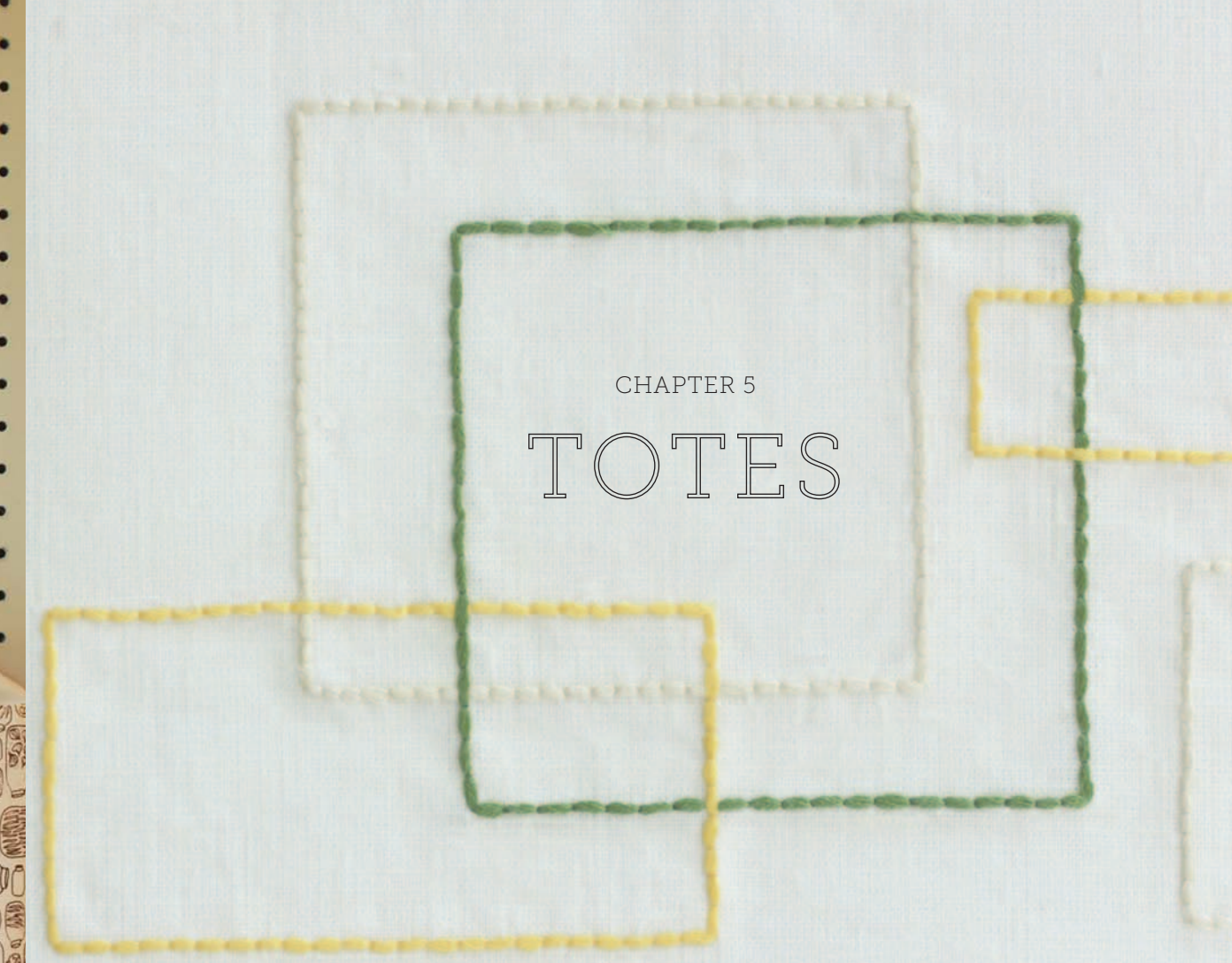


fig. D



CHAPTER 5

TOTES

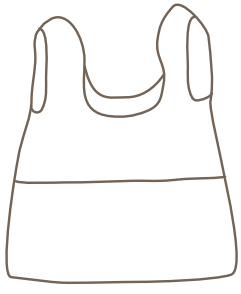
Whether used for hauling groceries to the store, packing art supplies for the kids, or taking lunch to work, tote bags are indispensable. The three bags in this chapter will teach you essential skills that you can use to make any type of bag. You'll learn how to square the bottoms of your bag to make a roomy and sturdy tote, how to make a pencil pocket and divider, and how to make a drawstring bag with French seams. And you'll learn all of this while creating something incredibly useful and eco-friendly!

MARKET TOTE

You might already have tote bags to take to the grocery store, but this one is pretty enough to take anywhere. Fully lined, the market tote is roomy with tucks at the bottom and has long straps so you can tote it over your shoulder or on your arm. The burlap gives it a simple durability and the patterned fabric allows you to add your own sense of style. This will become your essential get-up-and-go bag, ready and waiting by the front door. The bag can be rolled up to fit in your luggage or it can even be kept in your glove compartment for those unplanned trips to the store.

OPTIONS

- Try repurposed materials for an eco-friendly and economical version.
- Make a smaller version of this bag from netting for a fruit and vegetable tote that can go from the market straight to your refrigerator.
- Make the bag with coated cotton and you have a roomy, waterproof bag perfect for the beach or pool.
- Add a magnetic fastener (see page 97), pockets, pouches, and more to suit your needs.



SUPPLIES

½ yd/50 cm burlap

½ yd/50 cm patterned cotton fabric

1 yd/1 m cotton or canvas lining fabric

Matching thread

Fabric marker

Quilter's square (optional)

Seam allowance: ½"/12 mm

MULTIPLY YOUR SKILLS:
squared corners, handles

FINISHED DIMENSIONS:
22" x 19"/56 cm x 48 cm

STEP 1: CUT FABRIC.

Cut out the Market Tote templates from the pattern sheets included with this book, then cut out the burlap and outer and lining fabrics according to the pattern templates. Sew an overcasting or zigzag stitch around the bottom and side edges of the burlap to prevent fraying.

STEP 2: SEW OUTER BAG PIECES.

Pin and sew one burlap piece to a patterned fabric piece along the top long side, right sides together, as illustrated in figure A. Press the seams open. Repeat with the other matching pieces.

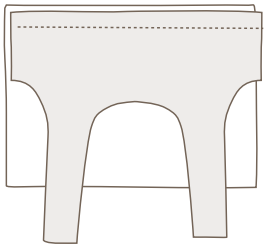


fig. A

fig. B

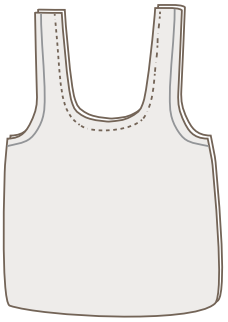


fig. C

STEP 3: SEW BAG AND LINING.

Pin the lining pieces right sides together. Sew the top straps together, then sew along the bottom and sides, attaching the lining pieces to one another, stopping ½"/12 mm from the curve where the straps will begin. See figure B. Then repeat with the main bag pieces, being sure to align the seams. Press all seams open.

STEP 4: SQUARE BOTTOMS.

Square off the bottom corners of the outer bag and the lining according to the instructions on page 91, measuring 2"/5 cm from the tip of the corner.

STEP 5: PRESS.

With the outer bag, press the outer edge of the straps (as indicated by the gray line in figure C) toward the wrong side of the fabric by ½"/12 mm. Repeat with the bag lining. This will prepare you for step 7.

STEP 6: ATTACH OUTER BAG TO LINING.

Turn the outer bag fabric right sides out, but leave the lining *wrong sides out*. Insert the outer bag into the lining so that the *right sides will be facing one another.* Pin together, being sure to match the top seams at the handles. Sew along the inside curve, as illustrated in figure C. Notch the corners to ease the curve.

STEP 7: FINISH.

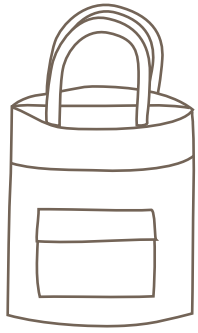
Turn the bag right sides out through an opening on the side. Push the lining into the outer bag. Press and pin together the side strap openings, adjusting if needed so that the fabric is aligned. Edge stitch along the outer edges of the handles on both sides.

DOODLE BAG

This doodle bag is perfect for kids on the go. Whether you're traveling in the car or by plane, it's always handy to have art supplies to keep little hands busy. This bag features a divider and a pencil pouch with a flap, and is fully lined. The best part about the doodle bag is that young artists can draw right on it with a fabric marker or paint it (see note on page 70). This bag makes a great gift for kids of all ages, especially when paired with some colored pencils and a drawing pad.

OPTIONS

- Personalize the bag with an embroidered or stamped name. Or simply use a whimsical printed fabric.
- The pencil pocket is on the outside, but could easily be moved to the inside of the bag if you'd prefer.
- You can choose to add the divider as instructed, or simplify and leave it out.
- The straps are made of cotton webbing, but you could easily make your own straps from matching fabric.



SUPPLIES

½ yd/50 cm ticking stripe fabric

Fat quarter (18" x 22"/46 x 56 cm) contrasting cotton fabric for pocket

1 yd/1 m canvas

1 yd/1 m 1½"-/4-cm-wide cotton webbing for straps

Fabric marker (erasable) or tailor's chalk

Permanent fabric marker

Matching thread

Seam allowance: ½"/12 mm, except where noted

MULTIPLY YOUR SKILLS:
pencil pouch, twill straps, divider

FINISHED DIMENSIONS:
13" x 11"/33 cm x 28 cm

NOTE: If you can have the child draw on the fabric before it's sewn, this is the easiest method. Cut out two canvas fabric pieces to 12" x 4½"/30.5 cm x 11 cm. Tape the fabric to a hard surface so that it doesn't slip while the child is drawing. You can have her first draw with the erasable fabric marker, then trace with the permanent fabric marker. You could also use fabric paint or stencils to make your design. If you are making this as a gift, just tuck a fabric pen inside with instructions so the child can personalize her own bag. You could also take a child's drawing and transfer it to the fabric yourself with embroidery or a fabric marker.

STEP 1: CUT FABRIC.

Cut the fabric and cotton webbing according to the following dimensions:

Ticking stripe:
Outer bag: 12" x 20"/30.5 cm x 50 cm
Pocket flap: 8" x 9"/20 cm x 23 cm

Contrasting cotton for pocket:
9" x 11"/23 cm x 28 cm

Canvas:
Outer bag doodled section: 12" x 4 ½"/30.5 cm x 11 cm (cut 2)
Lining: 12" x 14"/30.5 cm x 35.5 cm (cut 2)
Divider: 12" x 26"/30.5 cm x 66 cm

Cotton webbing for straps:
18"/46 cm lengths (cut 2)

STEP 2: SEW FRONT AND BACK.

Sew the canvas outer top pieces to the ticking stripe outer bag piece at both ends, right sides facing, as shown in figure A. Press the seams open.

STEP 3: PREPARE DIVIDER.

Fold the canvas divider piece widthwise, *wrong* sides together. Press in place. Sew a basting stitch ¼"/6 mm from the edges on the three open sides. See figure B. Set this aside for a later step.

STEP 4: MAKE POCKET.

Follow the seamless pocket instructions on page 20 for both the pocket piece and the flap piece, noting that the width of the pocket piece will be 9"/23 cm, so you will fold the fabric in half along the 9"/23 cm width. Turn both pieces right sides out and press the openings under by ½"/12 mm.

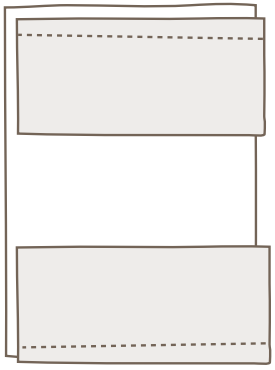


fig. A

fig. B

STEP 5: SEW POCKET DIVIDERS AND FLAP.

Pin the pocket in place on the front piece with the opening at the bottom, 3½"/9 cm from the top seam and 2"/5 cm from the edges. Sew around 1/8"/3 mm on three sides. With a fabric marker, draw the stitch guidelines every ¾"/2 cm from the edge stitching, as illustrated in figure C. Sew along the marked lines. Next, pin the flap into position so that it just covers the top of the pocket, with the open edge of the flap piece at the *top*, about ½"/12 mm below the seam. Stitch across the top, closing the opening and securing it to the bag.

STEP 6: BASTE STRAPS.

Pin the straps to the top edges of the outer bag 2½"/6 cm from either side seam, with raw edges aligned. Stitch ¼"/6 mm from the edge. See figure D.

STEP 7: SEW OUTER BAG SEAMS.

Fold the outer bag right sides together in half widthwise as indicated by the gray fold line in figure D, with right sides together. Then sew along the two side seams. Press the seams open.

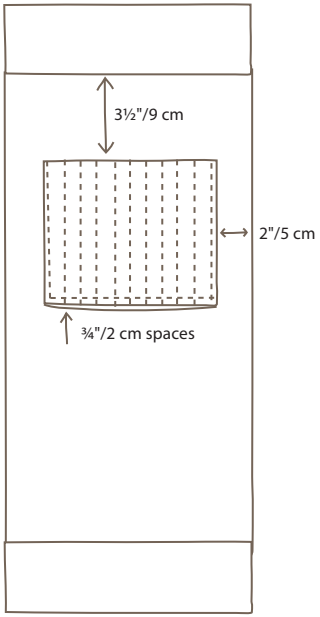


fig. C

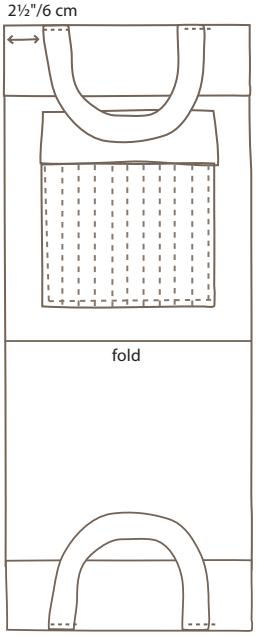


fig. D

STEP 8: SEW LINING AND DIVIDER TOGETHER.

Stack the bag lining and divider in this order: one lining piece right side up, then the divider in the center with raw edges aligned at the bottom, and another lining piece face down, as shown in figure E. Then sew around the three sides, leaving a 5"/12-cm opening at the bottom to turn the bag right sides out in the next step. Press the seams open.

STEP 9: PUT IT TOGETHER.

Turn the lining right sides out (with divider facing out) and slip it inside the outer bag, so that *right sides are facing* inside the bag. Pin the raw edges together around the top from the inside, aligning the side seams. The straps should now be inside the bag. Starting at a side seam, sew around the top. See figure F. Pull the bag right sides out through the opening in the lining and push the lining into the main bag. Press along the top seam. Edge stitch along the top of the bag. Sew together the opening in the lining by topstitching along the folded seam.

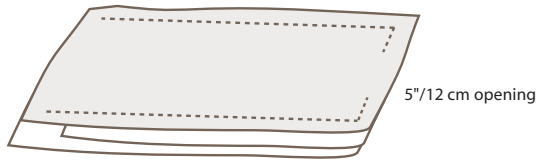


fig. E

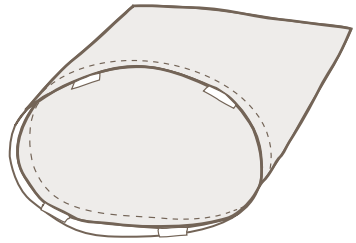


fig. F

Ball
MASON

LUNCH SACK

This insulated lunch sack is perfect for carrying healthy lunches to school or to the office. The simple construction makes the bag look like two separate pieces, but the drawstring lining is actually attached. For this project, you'll learn how to make a basic drawstring bag and combine that with your tote-making skills. This bag also introduces French seams, which will hide the inside seams and give the bag greater durability. The cotton fabric allows for easy washing.

OPTIONS

- Make this lunch sack in any size to suit your needs. An extra-large bag would make a wonderful picnic tote or gym bag, while a smaller bag would be perfect for carrying a water bottle and snack.
- If making the bag for a child, embroider or stamp his name on the outside.
- Add longer straps, embellish with trim or embroidery, add decorative stitching to the handles, or include decorative stamping such as the fruit stamps from the tea towels project (see page 12).
- Add a plastic cord lock to the ends of the drawstring cording to hold it securely in place.

SUPPLIES

½ yd/50 cm canvas

½ yd/50 cm cotton fabric

½ yd/50 cm bamboo batting

40"/101.5 cm 1"-/2.5-cm-wide cotton webbing for straps

1 yd/1 m ¼"-/6-mm-wide cotton cording for drawstring

Matching thread

Fabric marker

Seam allowance: as noted in project steps

MULTIPLY YOUR SKILLS:
drawstring closure, French seams (see how-to)

FINISHED DIMENSIONS:
11" x 13"/28 cm x 33 cm

STEP 1: CUT FABRIC.

Cut the fabric and straps according to the following dimensions:
Canvas: 13" x 12"/33 cm x 30.5 cm (cut 2)
Cotton: 18" x 13"/46 cm x 33 cm (cut 2)
Bamboo batting: 13" x 12"/33 cm x 30.5 cm (cut 2)
Cotton webbing: 20"/50 cm (cut 2)

STEP 2: PREPARE COTTON LINING PIECES.

As you sew the lining pieces together, you will need to make an opening for your drawstring to be inserted in a later step. On the longer side of one lining piece, starting at the top corner, sew an overcasting or zigzag stitch 3"/7.5 cm along the raw edge. Repeat with the other lining piece on the same side. With a fabric marker, make a 1"/2.5-cm line 1½"/4 cm down from the top corner.

STEP 3: MAKE FRENCH SEAMS IN LINING.

With *wrong* sides together, sew the lining pieces together with a ¼"/6 mm seam along three sides, skipping the 1"/2.5-cm section to leave an opening for the drawstring. See figure A. Turn the lining inside out and mark your drawstring opening on this side of the fabric with your marker, and skip over the opening again as you sew. You are now sewing *right sides together.* Sew along the three sides, this time ½"/12 mm from the edge. Press this seam to one side. See how-to instructions to learn more about French seams.

STEP 4: MAKE DRAWSTRING CASING.

Fold down the unfinished top opening of the lining toward the wrong side of the fabric by ½"/12 mm and press, then again by another 1"/2.5 cm and press again. Sew along ¾"/2 cm from the edge to form your drawstring casing.

STEP 5: SQUARE OFF CORNERS IN LINING.

Turn the lining *right* sides out. (You will be squaring your corners on the right side of the fabric because this will be hidden inside the bag). Follow the how-to instructions for squaring corners (see page 91), measuring 1½"/4 cm from the tip of the corner.

STEP 6: SEW OUTER BAG PIECES.

Sew the bamboo batting pieces to the wrong sides of the outer bag pieces with a basting stitch ¼"/6 mm from the edge around all four sides. Sew the outer bag pieces with attached insulation right sides together with a ½"/12-mm seam allowance, sewing around both sides and the bottom. Press the seams open. Along the top opening, press the fabric and insulated lining toward the wrong sides by 1"/2.5 cm, which will form the top edge in step 9.

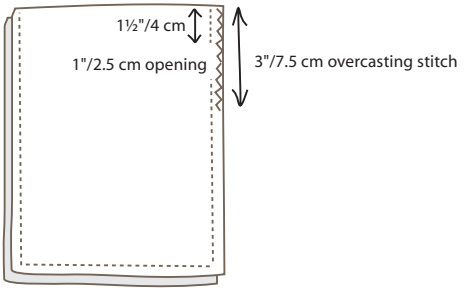


fig. A

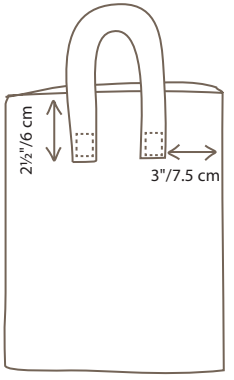


fig. B

STEP 7: SQUARE OFF CORNERS IN OUTER BAG.

Next, you will square off the corners of the *outer* bag, with the outer bag *wrong sides out* this time. Follow the how-to instructions for squaring corners as done in step 5.

STEP 8: SEW STRAPS.

Sew a zigzag or overcasting stitch along the raw ends of your straps to prevent fraying. Turn the outer bag right sides out. With one strap, fold the raw edge under by ¼"/6 mm, then pin the edges of the strap 2½"/6 cm from the folded top and 3"/7.5 cm from the side seam, as shown in figure B. Sew the strap in place, as shown, using 1"/2.5-cm squares of stitching on both ends. Repeat with the other strap, sewing it to the other side of the bag.

STEP 9: PUT IT TOGETHER.

With the drawstring lining bag right sides out, tuck it into the outer bag. Pin the drawstring lining to the top of the outer bag with the top of the lining extending from the outer bag. Flip the entire pinned bag *wrong sides out* because you will put the bag into your machine and sew on the front side of the fabric inside the bag. Edge stitch around the top of the outer bag ⅜"/3 mm from the edge, securing the drawstring lining to the bag. Then sew a second row of stitches ⅜"/1 cm from the edge.

QUICK TIP: When sewing through multiple layers and batting, reduce the thread tension, stitch slowly, and use longer stitches.

STEP 10: INSERT CORDING INTO DRAWSTRING CASING.

With a safety pin, thread the cording through the opening at the side seam and pull it out the other side. Tie the ends together.

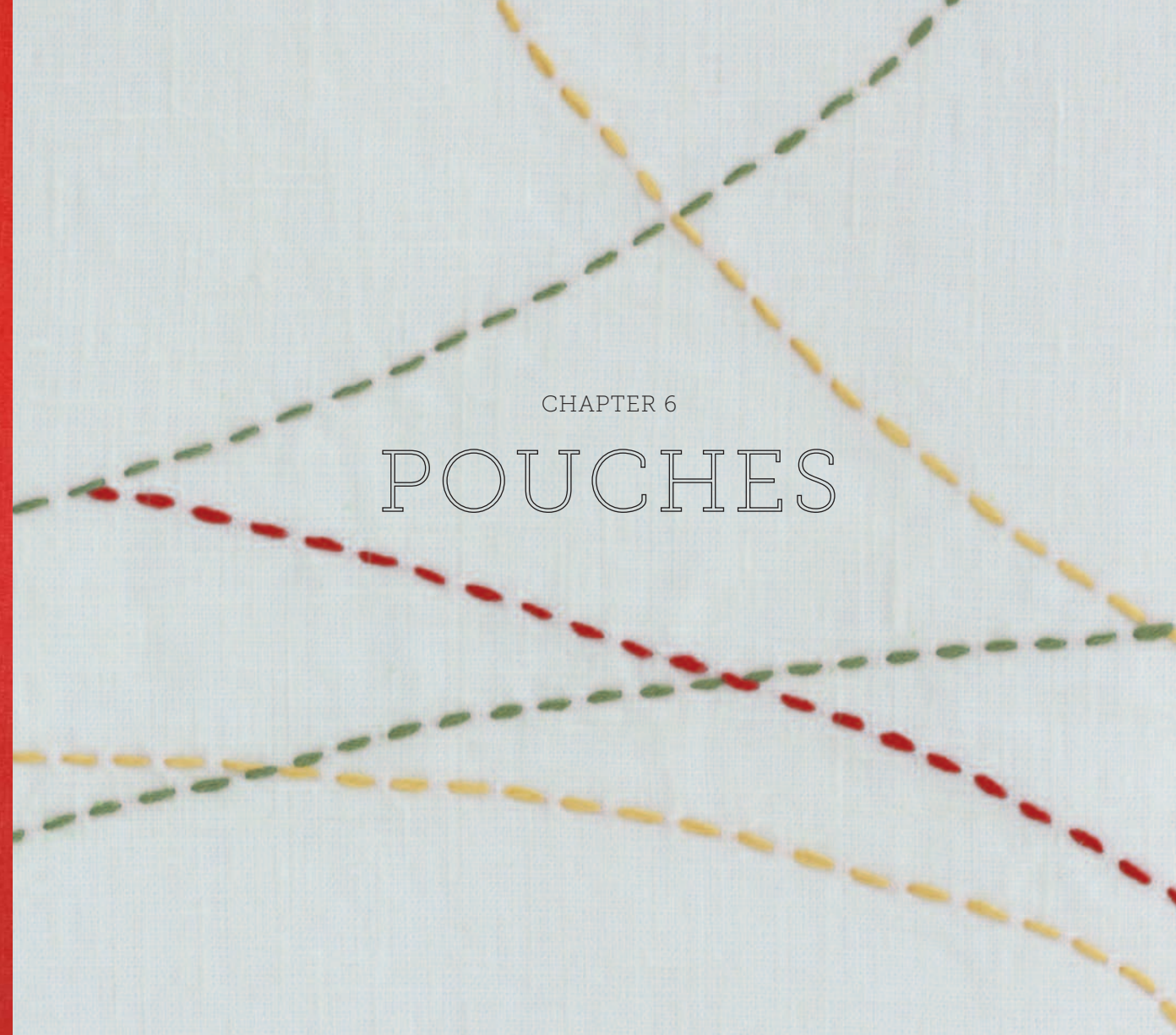
How-to: French Seams

When you add the word *French* to something, suddenly it's fancy, but a French seam is simply a seam with no visible raw edges. French seams are much easier than they sound. These are useful for garments where your seam will show, with fabric that frays easily, and to give any seam a professional finish. The technique involves sewing the fabric once, flipping it over and sewing a wider seam, enclosing the first. Sounds easy, right?

1 With your two pieces of fabric *wrong sides together,* sew a small seam along the edge.

2 Press this seam open, then turn right sides together and press the seam flat.

3 Now with *right sides together*, sew a wider seam on the wrong side of the fabric. Press this seam to the side.



CHAPTER 6

POUCHES

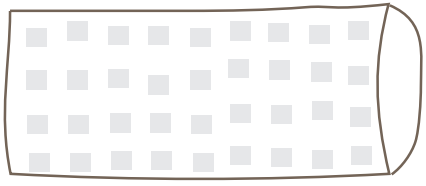
Who's afraid of zippers? Not you—at least not after you've read this chapter. For the pouches, you'll begin with a simple fold-and-sew glasses case, then move on to two projects incorporating zippers. You'll learn a simple method for installing a zipper in a bag, how to square off corners, as well as stamping and stenciling techniques. Pouches are extremely versatile and may quickly become an essential part of your sewing repertoire. These patterns can be customized to make any carrying case you need.

GRID GLASSES CASE

This simple fold-and-sew felt pouch offers an easy solution for keeping your eyeglasses protected. With an added stenciling technique, you'll transform this thick wool felt into your own personalized creation. Aside from the painting and drying time, this project can be done quickly using basic techniques.

OPTIONS

- This pattern was designed with smaller eyeglasses in mind, but you can easily enlarge it to accommodate sunglasses. Before you begin sewing, pin the felt around your glasses to achieve a perfect fit.
- If you're always misplacing your reading glasses, you can use a hole punch to make a hole in the felt and tie a string or ribbon to hang it on a convenient hook.
- The 2-mm-thick wool felt is essential for this project as it provides the needed stability for the case. If using thinner felt, you may want to consider lining or interfacing to add support.



SUPPLIES

FOR CASE

One 12"/30.5-cm square 2-mm wool felt (see note)

Matching thread

FOR PAINTING

Self-healing cutting mat

¼"/6 mm waterproof green floral tape (see note)

Stencil brush

Fabric paint

Paper towel for blotting

NOTE: See Resources (page 165) for suggestions on where to buy 2-mm wool felt. Floral tape is available at craft stores and online.

MULTIPLY YOUR SKILLS:
working with felt, stenciling

FINISHED DIMENSIONS:
approximately 3" x 7"/
7.5 cm x 17 cm

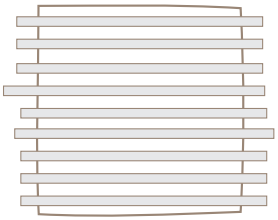
STENCILING INSTRUCTIONS

STEP 1: CUT FELT.

Measure and cut the felt to 6¼" x 7¼"/16 cm x 18 cm, being sure to cut the corners at perfect right angles.

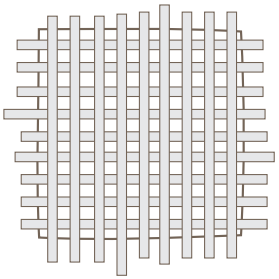
STEP 2: MAKE A GRID WITH TAPE.

Place the cut felt piece on the cutting mat. Lay a piece of tape horizontally across the bottom of the felt, ¼"/6 mm from the bottom, then continue spacing ¼"/6 mm apart until you have covered the felt, as shown in figure A. Press down firmly to make sure the tape is securely affixed. The tape should be attached to the felt and secured at both ends on the cutting mat. Repeat, this time taping vertically. See figure B.



Tape every ¼"/6 mm horizontally.

fig. A



Tape every ¼"/6 mm vertically.

fig. B

STEP 3: PAINT.

Using the stencil brush, stipple the paint onto the felt between the tape lines. Wait just a minute or two, and then blot with a paper towel, removing excess paint from the tape. Then carefully pull up the tape, holding the felt as you go. Allow the paint to dry for several hours before sewing.

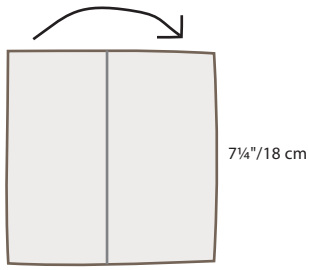
SEWING INSTRUCTIONS

STEP 1: FOLD TOGETHER.

Fold the felt in half lengthwise and pin in place, with wrong sides facing. See figure C.

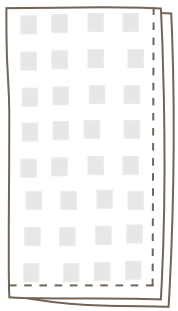
STEP 2: SEW.

Reduce the tension on your sewing machine to accommodate the thick felt. Sew along the side and bottom with a ¼"/6-mm seam allowance. See figure D.



6¼"/16 cm
Fold in half lengthwise.

fig. C



Sew along bottom and side.

fig. D

POLKA DOT POUCH

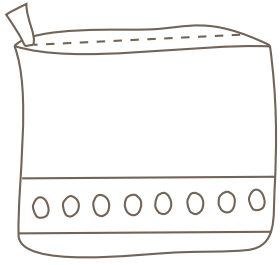
This versatile zippered pouch is perfect for carrying around cards and cash. The pouch is fully lined and incorporates a decorative element with twill tape, simply stamped with a pencil eraser. If you've never sewn a zipper before, making a pouch is a great introduction to the process. With this project, you'll build on your construction skills with a basic lined pouch pattern and you will learn to master zipper installation.

OPTIONS

› Make this pouch any size to hold pencils, jewelry, electronics, or whatever you need to carry and keep safe.

› Instead of the stamped twill tape, add an appliqué, embroidery design, or just use your favorite fabric.

› This is an excellent project for utilizing fabric scraps.



SUPPLIES
FOR STAMPING

Masking tape
Fabric marker
Pencil with new eraser
Fabric paint
Paint tray
Scrap fabric

FOR POUCH

6½"/16.5 cm strip 1"-/2.5-cm-wide twill tape
18" x 22"/46 cm x 56 cm (fat quarter) lining fabric
18" x 22"/46 cm x 56 cm (fat quarter) outer canvas
Matching thread
7"/17-cm or longer all-purpose zipper
Chopstick
Seam allowance: ½"/12 mm

MULTIPLY YOUR SKILLS:
installing a zipper (see how-to), fabric stamping

FINISHED DIMENSIONS:
5½" x 4½"/14 cm x 11 cm

STAMPING INSTRUCTIONS

STEP 1: MARK TWILL TAPE.

Use masking tape to secure the ends of the twill tape to a flat surface and mark with a fabric marker along the center every ½"/12 mm.

STEP 2: STAMP TWILL TAPE.

Pour a small amount of fabric paint into the tray. Dip the pencil eraser into the paint and make a test stamp on a scrap piece of fabric. Then stamp on each of your marks along the twill tape, continuing to add more paint to the eraser. Allow the paint to dry for a few hours before sewing.

SEWING INSTRUCTIONS

STEP 1: CUT FABRIC.

Cut two each of the lining and outer fabrics to 5½" x 6½"/14 cm x 16.5 cm.

STEP 2: SEW TAPE TO FRONT.

Pin and sew the stamped twill tape 1½"/4 cm from the bottom edge of the front piece of fabric. Sew along the top and bottom of the tape, just along the edge.

STEP 3: SEW FABRIC ONTO ZIPPER.

Follow the how-to instructions for installing a zipper, being sure to leave a ½"/12-mm space at either end of the zipper for your seam allowance. See figure A.

STEP 4: TRIM EXCESS ZIPPER.

With the zipper closed, trim the ends of the zipper that are longer than the fabric, as shown in figure A. You can hand baste the zipper together at the cut line, but it's not necessary as long as you don't open the zipper all the way.

STEP 5: SEW POUCH AND LINING.

Open the zipper halfway. Fold the lining pieces together so they are right sides facing, flattening the zipper ends. Fold the outer fabric pieces out of the way. Pin the lining together and sew along all three sides, *leaving a 3"/7.5-cm opening at the bottom*. You will use a ½"/12-mm seam allowance, sewing over the zipper ends, up to the teeth. See figure B. Repeat with the outer pieces, sewing right sides together without catching the zipper. This time, do *not* leave an opening at the bottom.

STEP 6: TRIM AND FINISH.

Trim the excess fabric and clip the corners. With a chopstick, gently push out all four corners of the outer fabric. Turn the pouch right sides out through the opening. Topstitch the opening in the lining closed from the right side of the fabric. Push the lining into the pouch and press it flat.

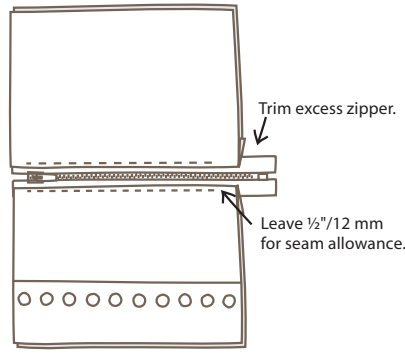


fig. A

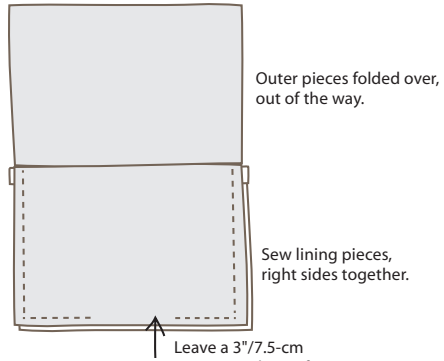

Outer pieces folded over, out of the way.
Sew lining pieces, right sides together.
Leave a 3"/7.5-cm opening in lining for turning right sides out.

fig. B

How-to: Install a Zipper

These instructions are for installing a zipper in a pouch or purse with a lining. You will need a zipper presser foot, installed according to your sewing machine manual's directions. Note that attaching a zipper in clothing is a different process.

1 With the zipper closed, align one piece of the outer fabric and one piece of the lining fabric along the edge of the zipper tape, with fabric right sides facing and the zipper between the layers. Pin at each end of the zipper so you will know where to start and end your stitches.

QUICK TIP: If you want to secure your fabric without pinning, you can use basting glue or adhesive tape.

2 With the zipper presser foot on your machine, stitch about ¼"/6 mm from the edge. See figure A. If the pull of the zipper gets in your way, leave the needle in the down position and unzip the zipper to move the pull.

3 Fold down both the outer fabric and the lining fabric and press. Topstitch along the fold. See figure B.

4 Repeat the process for the other side of the zipper, being sure to align it with the first side so that the zipper will pull smoothly.

5 Trim the ends of the zipper that are longer than the fabric, as shown in figure C. Hand baste the zipper closed or sew with a zigzag stitch just before the cut line.

6 Before you move on to the next step of your project, check to make sure the zipper opens and closes properly without catching the fabric.

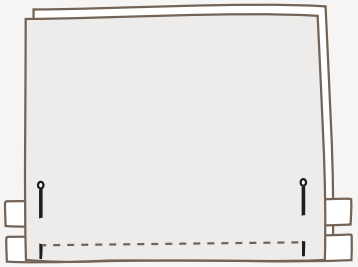


fig. A

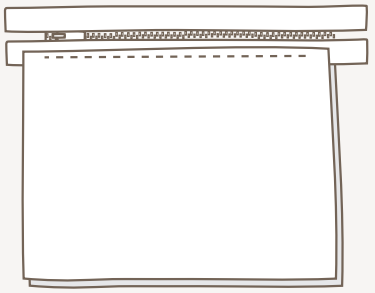


fig. B

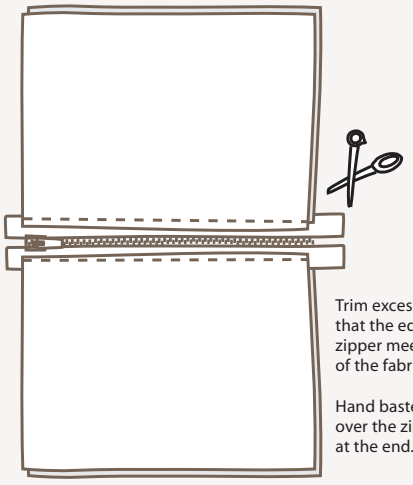

Trim excess zipper so that the edge of the zipper meets the edge of the fabric.
Hand baste or sew over the zipper teeth at the end.

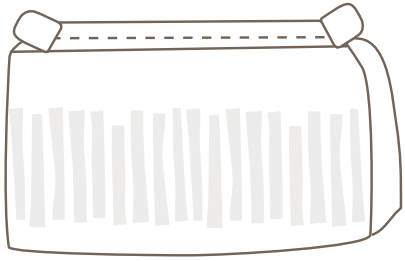
fig. C

LAWN COSMETIC BAG

Once you've mastered a zippered pouch, you'll be ready to move on to this lined cosmetic bag that uses a similar construction method with a zipper, but also features squared corners to create the roomy box shape. Fully lined for extra durability, this bag is made of cotton for easy washing. The stencil is made using the freezer paper technique. If you've never tried making stencils with freezer paper, I think you'll quickly become addicted.

OPTIONS

- Add handles to the outside and increase the size to make a pattern for a simple duffel bag.
- Design your own stencil for this project or use the one provided in different colors. A bright multicolor design would be perfect for an art bag.
- Skip the lining on this bag and simply use a waterproof outer fabric.



SUPPLIES

FOR STENCILING

Freezer paper (found at the grocery store)

Self-healing cutting mat

Masking tape

Craft knife

Paint tray

Fabric paint

Stencil brush

FOR BAG

18" x 22"/46 cm x 56 cm (fat quarter) or ½ yd/50 cm outer canvas fabric

18" x 22"/46 cm x 56 cm (fat quarter) or ½ yd/50 cm lining fabric

8"/20 cm 1"-/2.5-cm-wide twill tape

9"/23-cm separating zipper

Matching thread

Fabric marker

Quilter's square or ruler

Chopstick

Seam allowance: ½"/12 mm, except where noted

MULTIPLY YOUR SKILLS:
freezer paper stenciling, installing a zipper, squaring corners (see how-to)

FINISHED DIMENSIONS:
9" x 5" x 5"/23 cm x 12 cm x 12 cm

STENCIL INSTRUCTIONS

STEP 1: CUT OUT DESIGN.

Cut out the Lawn Cosmetic Bag template from the pattern sheet included with this book. Next, cut a sheet of freezer paper to 6" x 14"/15 cm x 35.5 cm. Place the freezer paper on your cutting mat, with the template on top of the freezer paper. Tape down both sheets with the masking tape. Cut out the inside of the design with the craft knife, creating a negative space in the center, as indicated on the template. You will be cutting through both the paper template and the freezer paper.

STEP 2: IRON DESIGN ONTO FABRIC.

Cut out the two outer fabric pieces of your bag, 14" x 10"/35.5 cm x 25 cm each. With the iron set on high heat, place the shiny side of the freezer paper *down* on the right side of one fabric piece and press the stencil in place until it bonds with the fabric. Do not use steam. The design should be centered on the fabric, as shown in figure A. Repeat for the other outer fabric piece.

STEP 3: PAINT THE FABRIC.

Pour the fabric paint into the tray and dip the stencil brush in the paint, then stipple the paint over the design, being sure to hold your brush perpendicular to the fabric. After just a few minutes, carefully pull off the freezer paper, holding the fabric in place as you pull. Allow the paint to dry for a few hours before sewing.

SEWING INSTRUCTIONS

STEP 1: CUT FABRIC.

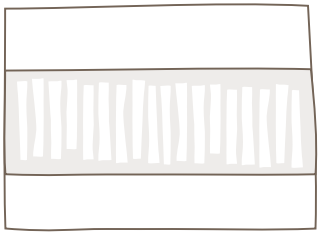
If you skipped the stenciling, cut two pieces of the outer fabric, 14" x 10"/35.5 cm x 25 cm each. Cut two pieces of lining fabric, 14" x 10"/35.5 cm x 25 cm each. Cut the twill tape into two 4"/10-cm pieces.

STEP 2: INSTALL ZIPPER.

Follow the instructions on page 86 to install the zipper. *Be sure to stitch only along the zipper, leaving the ends open, as shown in figure B.*

STEP 3: ATTACH TABS.

With the twill tape folded in half and positioned with raw edges out, pin and sew the tabs on the right side just at either end of the zipper, as shown in figure C. The raw edge will be 2"/5 cm from the edge of your fabric.



Freezer paper stencil centered.

fig. A

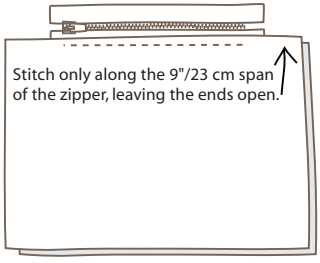


fig. B

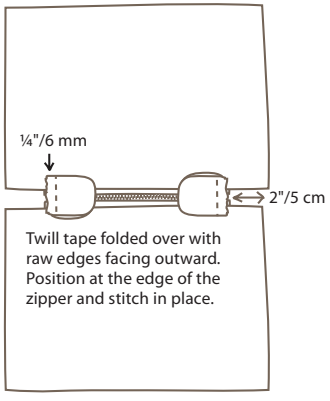


fig. C

STEP 4: SEW LINING.

Pin together the lining pieces, right sides facing. Sew around three sides, leaving a 4"/10-cm opening in the center bottom to turn the bag right sides out. See figure D.

STEP 5: SEW OUTER FABRIC.

With the zipper halfway open, sew the outer fabric right sides together along all three sides, this time with no opening. Press the seams open.

STEP 6: SQUARE OFF BOTTOM CORNERS.

Follow the how-to instructions for squaring corners, measuring 2"/5 cm from the tip of the corner. Square off both bottom corners of the lining, then repeat with both bottom corners of the outer fabric.

STEP 7: SQUARE OFF TOP CORNERS OF LINING AND OUTER FABRIC *TOGETHER*.

You will square the corners again, as in the last step, but this time *with the corners of the lining and outer fabric layered together.* With one side of your bag, pull out both top corners and make a triangle with the seam at the center, holding closed the opening by the zipper. Again mark 2"/5 cm from the tip, draw a line across the fabric from edge to edge, and sew across this line. *You will be sewing through both the lining and the outer fabric.* See figure E. Trim the excess triangles of fabric ½"/12 mm from the stitch line. Repeat for the opposite corner.

QUICK TIP: When sewing through several layers at once, reduce the tension on your machine and use a longer stitch. Work slowly. If you are concerned about sewing over the zipper, simply sew right up to the zipper on either side.

STEP 8: TURN RIGHT SIDES OUT AND FINISH.

Turn the bag right sides out, pushing out all the corners with a chopstick. Stitch the opening in the lining closed, and then tuck the lining inside the bag.

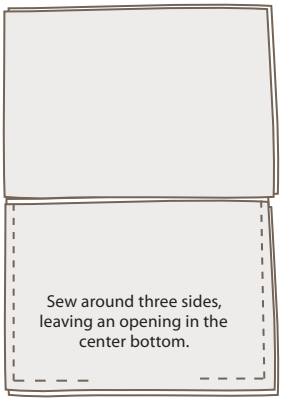


fig. D

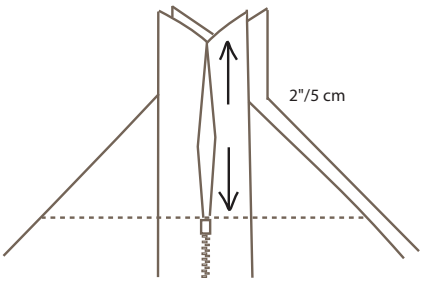


fig. E

How-to: Square Corners

This technique can be used in tote bags, purses, or other projects where you need extra room. The bottom corners of the bag are flattened and sewn down, creating width and turning a plain flat bag into a three-dimensional one. In this book, you'll use this technique in totes, handbags, and for the cosmetic bag. This technique is generally done on the wrong sides of the fabric, unless otherwise noted in the project instructions. The size of the corner will also depend on the pattern. You'll need a fabric marker and a quilter's square or ruler.

1 To prepare to square the corners of a bag, sew your bag right sides together and press open the seams.

2 With the bag *wrong sides out* (unless otherwise directed), take one corner in your hand and pull the corner open to form a 90-degree angle in the opposite direction. The seams should be aligned one on top of the other. Press flat to form a triangle. See figure A. You can pin this in place and look on the right sides of the bag to make sure that your seams will be perfectly aligned.

3 With a quilter's square or ruler, mark 2"/5 cm (or as directed) from the tip of the corner. Make a line straight across at this point, from fold to fold, as shown in figure A. Sew along this line.

4 Clip the excess triangle of fabric and sew over the raw edges with an overcasting stitch. See figure B. Repeat with the other corner.

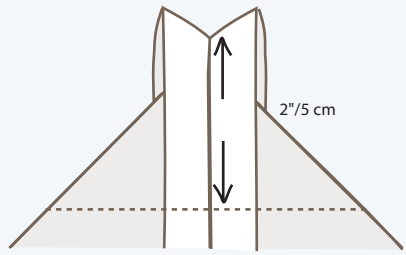


fig. A

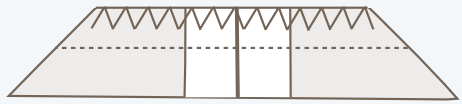


fig. B

CHAPTER 7

HANDBAGS

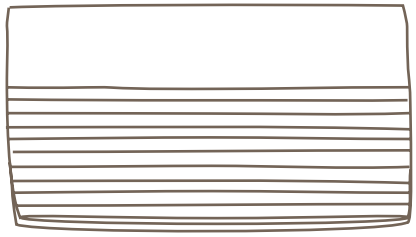
You can never have too many bags. In this chapter, you'll learn three different pleating techniques. The first project, a sophisticated clutch with crisp, pintuck pleats, is the perfect accessory for a night on the town. Next, you'll learn how to make a feminine tiered handbag, great for everyday use. Finally, you'll make a pleated satchel with a shoulder strap, big enough to hold a laptop, books, or whatever larger items you need to tote. Once you've sewn all three bags in this chapter, you'll have mastered three different pleating techniques and three different bag styles. Trust me, once you start making bags, you'll be hooked.

PINTUCK CLUTCH

The clean lines of this pintuck clutch will lend simple sophistication to your wardrobe. Roomy and fully lined, it is both functional and elegant. The magnetic snap closure keeps your belongings secured, while the fold-over style adds an interesting design detail. A technique often seen in tuxedo shirts, the pintuck is basically a knife pleat stitched down, so that the fabric is folded in small folds in the same direction and stitched in place, one fold at a time. This technique will add a crisp, defined look to any project.

OPTIONS

- You can make a nice evening bag in a washed silk or linen, but if you plan to use lighter-weight fabrics, be sure to add interfacing and provide reinforcement for the magnetic fastener.
- Once you've learned pintucks, try using them on pillows, window shades, blankets, clothing, or anything else you can imagine.



SUPPLIES

1 yd/1 m twill

Heavy-weight fusible interfacing or patch

Fabric marker

Matching thread

¾"/2-cm magnetic fastener

Chopstick

Seam allowance: ½"/12 mm

NOTE: This bag will be self-lined, so all of the outer and lining pieces will be cut from the same fabric. A fusible patch is helpful to use for reinforcement behind the magnetic fastener, but a small piece of heavy-weight fusible interfacing will work as well.

MULTIPLY YOUR SKILLS:
pintuck pleats, magnetic fastener (see how-to), lined clutch pattern

FINISHED DIMENSIONS:
11" x 7"/28 cm x 18 cm (folded)

STEP 1: CUT FABRIC.

Cut the fabric according to the following dimensions:

Lining twill: 12" x 16"/30.5 cm x 40.5 cm (cut 2)
Outer twill back: 12" x 16"/30.5 cm x 40.5 cm
Outer twill front: 12" x 24"/30.5 cm x 60 cm
Fusible interfacing or patch: 2" x 2"/5 cm x 5 cm (cut 2)

STEP 2: MARK PINTUCK LINES.

On the right side of the longer fabric piece, begin marking the lines for the pintucks with a fabric marker and a ruler. Starting 2"/5 cm from the top, mark every 1"/2.5 cm until you have made 10 lines in all. See figure A.

STEP 3: SEW PINTUCKS.

At the top marked line, as shown in figure A, fold the fabric and press. The folded edge should be on the right side of the fabric. Sew a straight stitch ¼"/6 mm from the folded edge. Then press this pleat up toward the top of the fabric. Repeat until you have sewn all 10 pintucks. Trim this piece of fabric, if needed, so that it is exactly 12" x 16"/30.5 cm x 40.5 cm, matching the other fabric pieces.

STEP 4: ATTACH MAGNETIC FASTENER.

On the *right side* of a 12-x-16"/30.5-cm-x-40.5-cm piece of fabric (not the piece with the pintucks), mark 2"/5 cm from the top and 2"/5 cm from the bottom in the center, 6"/15 cm from either edge, as shown in figure B. Follow the how-to instructions on the next page for attaching a magnetic fastener.

Start folding at the top line, 2"/5 cm from the top.

Draw 10 lines 1"/2.5 cm apart.

fig. A

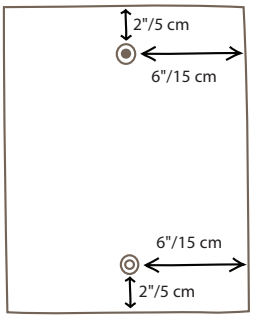


fig. B

fig. C

fig. D

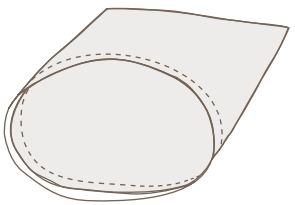


fig. E

STEP 5: SEW LINING AND OUTER BAG.

Pin the two remaining 12"-x-16"/30.5-cm-x-40.5-cm pieces of fabric right sides together and sew around the sides and bottom, *leaving a 5"/12.5-cm opening in the bottom* to turn the bag right sides out in step 7. See figure C. Next, pin the two outer pieces right sides together. Sew around the sides and bottom, but this time do *not* leave an opening at the bottom. See figure D. With both the lining and outer bags, trim any excess fabric, clip the corners, and press the seams open.

STEP 6: SEW BAG TOGETHER.

Turn the lining right sides out and tuck it inside the outer fabric bag (still wrong sides out), so that the right sides are facing one another. Align the side seams and pin the raw edges together. Sew around the top, as shown in figure E.

STEP 7: TURN RIGHT SIDES OUT AND TOPSTITCH.

Turn the bag right sides out through the opening in the lining, gently pushing out all the corners with the chopstick. Topstitch to close the lining and push the lining back into the bag. Press flat.

How-to: Install a Magnetic Fastener

Magnetic fasteners are a quick and easy way to add a closure to a bag or purse. A fusible patch or a piece of fusible interfacing pressed onto the back of your fabric will add stability to the magnetic fastener. Your fastener will come with two magnetic sides with prongs and small metal pieces to secure front pieces. Be sure to read the instructions that come with your magnetic fastener for further clarification.

1 With a ruler and fabric marker, mark the location for both sides of the magnetic fastener.

2 Press the fusible interfacing or patch on the wrong side of the fabric under your marks.

3 With one side of the magnetic fastener, center the prongs on your mark and make additional marks for each prong.

4 With a pair of small sharp scissors, carefully cut tiny slits in the fabric and interfacing, then insert the prongs into the right side of the fabric.

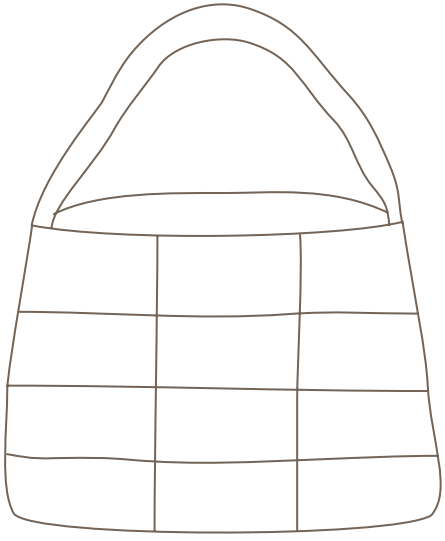
5 From the back side, slide the metal backing on and press the prongs closed. Repeat the process for the other side of the fastener.

TIERED BAG

This shoulder bag made of sturdy twill fabric features tiers of fabric, a fully lined interior with a simple pocket, a magnetic fastener, and a single shoulder strap. In this project, you'll take your pleating skills a step further by creating rows of pleats and tucks.

OPTIONS

- Choose your favorite patterned fabric for the exterior or add pattern to the lining.
- Add a zippered pocket or a key hook in the interior.
- Create double stitching in contrasting thread to add an extra detail.



SUPPLIES

½ yd/50 cm twill
½ yd/50 cm cotton lining fabric
Heavy-weight fusible interfacing or patch
Fabric marker
Rotary cutter
Self-healing cutting mat
Matching thread
Contrasting thread
¾"/2-cm magnetic fastener
Chopstick

Seam allowance: ½"/12 mm

MULTIPLY YOUR SKILLS:
fabric straps, tiered pleats

FINISHED DIMENSIONS:
9" x 13"/23 cm x 33 cm

STEP 1: CUT FABRIC.

Cut out the Tiered Bag template from the pattern sheet included with this book and cut two pieces of twill outer fabric according to the template. Next, cut out the strap and interfacing according to the following dimensions. (You will cut the lining fabric in step 4.)

Strap: 4" x 24"/10 cm x 60 cm
Heavy-weight interfacing: 2" x 2"/5 cm x 5 cm (cut 2)

STEP 2: MAKE KNIFE PLEATS.

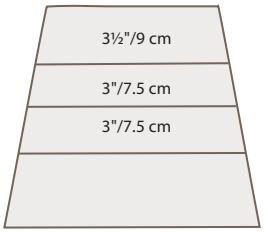
Working on the *wrong side* of one outer piece of fabric, mark lines with a fabric marker beginning 3½"/9 cm from the top, as shown in figure A. The next line should be 3"/7.5 cm below the first, and the third and final line should be 3"/7.5 cm below again. At each of the lines, pull the fabric *up* into a ½"/12-mm pleat, with your line along the fold. Press each fold as you work. See figure B. Pin the folds in place along the sides. Repeat with the other outer piece of fabric.

STEP 3: MAKE VERTICAL FOLDS.

Again on the *wrong side* of the fabric, draw vertical lines with a fabric marker 5"/12 cm from both sides, as indicated in figure C. Make a fold on each line, with the folded edge on the wrong side of the fabric. Press the folds in place. Topstitch along these folds (still on the wrong side of the fabric), ⅛"/3 mm from the edge of the fold. Press the stitched folds to one side. Repeat with the other outer piece of fabric.

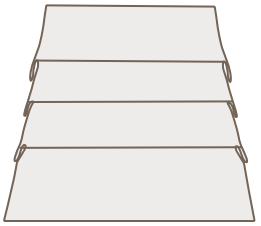
STEP 4: CUT LINING FABRIC.

Place the two outer pieces right sides together on the cutting mat. Cut off any excess fabric and make sure the two pieces are equal in size. Using these pieces as a template, cut out two pieces of lining fabric.



With a fabric marker, create the fold lines.

fig. A



½"/12 mm
Cross section of fabric folds.

fig. B

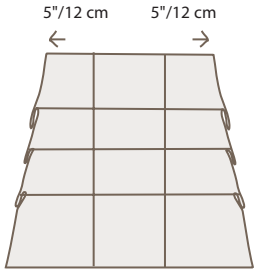


fig. C

STEP 5: MAKE POCKET.

Follow the how-to instructions to make a seamless pocket (see page 20), cutting a piece of lining fabric 7" x 12"/17 cm x 30.5 cm for a finished pocket size of 6" x 6"/15 cm x 15 cm. Center the finished pocket approximately 3"/7.5 cm from the top edge of one lining piece and sew in place around three sides, leaving the top folded side open.

STEP 6: INSTALL MAGNETIC FASTENER.

Mark 1½"/4 cm from the top center of both lining pieces. Follow the how-to instructions for installing a magnetic fastener (see page 97).

STEP 7: MAKE STRAP.

Fold one raw edge of the strap piece over toward the wrong side of the fabric by ½"/12 mm, pressing as you fold. Repeat for the other side, as shown in figure D. Fold and press the strip in half lengthwise so the two folds meet at the edge. Topstitch along the open side, ⅛"/3 mm from the edge. Repeat the stitching on the other edge of the strap, also ⅛"/3 mm from the edge.

STEP 8: SEW BAG AND LINING.

With right sides together, pin and sew the outer pieces of the bag together by sewing around three sides. *Be sure the pleats are aligned at the seams.* Repeat with the lining fabric, but *leave a 5"/12-cm opening at the bottom* to turn right sides out in step 11. Press open the seams.

STEP 9: SQUARE OFF CORNERS.

Square off the corners on both the outer fabric and lining. Follow the how-to instructions for squaring corners (see page 91), measuring 2"/5 cm from the tip of the corner.

STEP 10: BASTE STRAP TO OUTER BAG.

Turn the outer bag right sides out and pin the strap ends on either side of the bag, so the raw edges of the strap meet the raw edges at the top edge of the bag. The strap ends should be centered with the side seams. Baste both strap ends to the bag, ¼"/6 mm from the edges. See figure E.

STEP 11: SEW LINING AND OUTER BAG TOGETHER.

With the lining still wrong sides out, insert the outer bag (right sides out) into the lining so that right sides are facing one another. The strap will be inside the bag between the layers. Pin in place, making sure the side seams are aligned. Sew around the top ½"/12 mm from the edge. Turn the bag right sides out by pulling through the opening in the lining. Push out the corners with a chopstick.

STEP 12: TOPSTITCH OPENING AND FINISH.

Topstitch the opening in the lining closed. Press the top seam of the bag flat and edge stitch around the top of the bag, ⅛"/3 mm from the edge.

fig. D

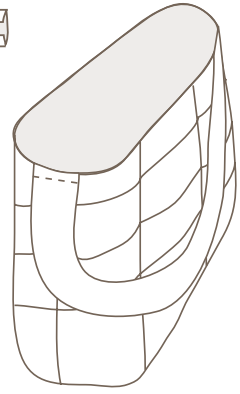


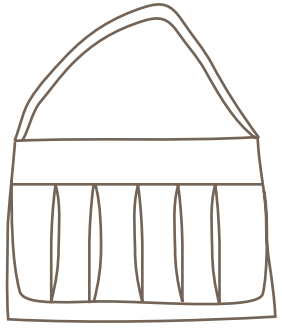
fig. E

PLEATED SATCHEL

Constructed differently from the other two handbags in this chapter, with a box-shaped bottom, this satchel introduces sleek inverted box pleats to give it a simple sophistication, while the wide strap, magnetic fastener, and interior zippered pocket add functionality. Fashionable and practical, it's just the right size for work or school.

OPTIONS

- Adjust the size of this bag to suit your needs and add or remove details to make the project your own.
- Make the bag smaller in a fun print for kids, or skip the pleats and add an appliqué design.
- Make the exterior in your own choice of fabrics; just be sure to use a sturdy fabric to give the bag shape, or add interfacing.
- Add an adjustable strap with d-rings at the sides, install a zipper at the top, or add an interior clip for keys for extra functionality.



SUPPLIES

1 yd/1 m twill or cotton canvas

1 yd/1 m cotton lining fabric

Heavy-weight fusible interfacing or fabric patch (see note)

Fabric marker or tailor's chalk

Magnetic fastener

Matching thread

7"/17-cm all-purpose zipper

Chopstick

NOTE: A fusible patch is helpful to use for reinforcement behind the magnetic fastener, but a small piece of heavy-weight fusible interfacing will work as well.

Seam allowance: ½"/12 mm

MULTIPLY YOUR SKILLS:
inverted box pleats, box bag construction, zippered pocket (see how-to)

FINISHED DIMENSIONS:
14" x 12" x 3"/
35.5 cm x 30.5 cm x 7.5 cm

STEP 1: CUT FABRIC.

Twill:
Strap: 5" x 44"/12 cm x 112 cm
Front and back: 15" x 13"/38 cm x 33 cm (cut 2)
Flap pleated section: 9" x 25"/23 cm x 63.5 cm
Flap top section: 4" x 15"/10 cm x 38 cm
Flap lining: 15" x 12"/38 cm x 30.5 cm
Sides: 4" x 13"/10 cm x 33 cm (cut 2)
Bottom: 4" x 15"/10 cm x 38 cm

Cotton lining:
Front and back: 15" x 13"/38 cm x 33 cm (cut 2)
Sides: 4" x 13"/10 cm x 33 cm (cut 2)
Bottom: 4" x 15"/10 cm x 38 cm

Heavy-weight fusible interfacing: 2" x 2"/5 cm x 5 cm (cut 2)

Zippered pocket: 8" x 13"/20 cm x 33 cm

QUICK TIP: When working with twill, you should be sure that the main bag pieces are cut in the same grain direction so the diagonal effect will be consistent.

STEP 2: MARK PLEATS ON FLAP.

With the larger 9"-x-25"/23-cm-x-63.5-cm flap piece, use a fabric marker or chalk to draw vertical lines 4"/10 cm apart on the right side, beginning ½"/12 mm from the sides, as shown in figure A. Then mark 1"/2.5 cm on either side of these lines, as shown in figure B.

STEP 3: FOLD AND PRESS.

Still working on the right side of the fabric, fold and press the outside lines in toward the center line, as shown in figure C. Repeat for all five pleats. To hold the pleats in place, press them down again and stitch along the top and bottom, about ¼"/6 mm from the edge, as shown in figure D. If needed, cut excess fabric to make sure this piece is now 15"/38 cm wide.

STEP 4: ATTACH MAGNETIC FASTENER.

On the right sides of the fabric, attach the magnetic closure on the bottom of the 15"-x-12"/38-cm-x-30.5-cm flap lining piece and the bottom of a 15"-x-13"/38-cm-x-33-cm bag front piece. Mark in the center 1½"/4 cm from the bottom of the lining piece and 4½"/11 cm from the bottom of the twill front piece. Follow the how-to instructions for attaching a magnetic fastener (see page 97).

STEP 5: FINISH FLAP.

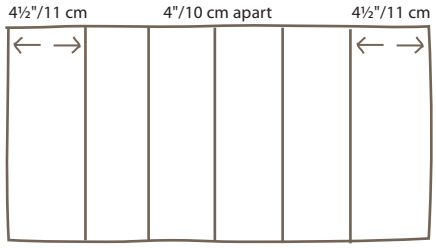
With right sides together, sew the pleated section to the smaller 4"-x-15"/10-cm-x-38-cm flap outer fabric piece. See figure E. Press open the seam. Then sew this piece right sides together to the 15"-x-12"/38-cm-x-30.5-cm twill flap lining piece with the magnetic snap at the bottom pleated end, sewing around three sides and leaving the top open, as shown in figure F. Clip the corners and trim excess fabric. Turn right sides out, press flat, and edge stitch. The top of your flap will still have raw edges.

STEP 6: MAKE ZIPPERED POCKET.

Follow the how-to instructions to make a zippered pocket.

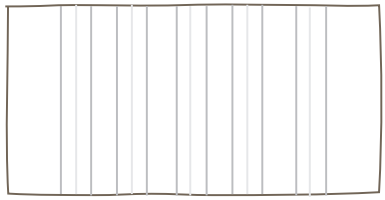
STEP 7: MAKE STRAP.

Fold and press the raw edges of the strap piece by ½"/12 mm toward the wrong side of the fabric, as shown in figure G. Then fold the entire piece in half lengthwise, press, and pin in place. Stitch the folds together on the right side of the fabric, ⅛"/3 mm from the edge. Repeat the stitching on the other side of the strap.



Draw vertical lines 4"/10 cm apart, with an extra ½"/12 mm on the sides.

fig. A



Draw lines 1"/2.5 cm from either side of the first lines.

fig. B

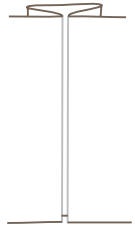


fig. C

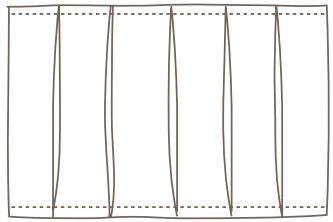


fig. D

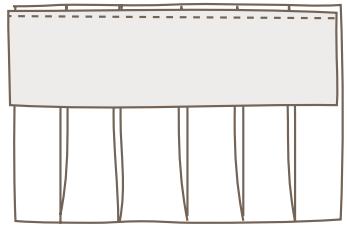
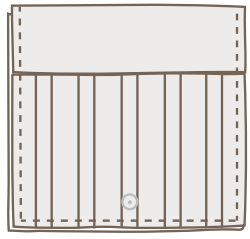


fig. E



Magnetic snap on lining piece should be at the bottom.

fig. F

fig. G

STEP 8: SEW BAG AND LINING.

Both the body of the bag and the lining will be sewn into a box shape. Gather the five outer bag pieces (front, back, sides, and bottom). With right sides together, pin and sew one side piece along the 13"/33-cm side of the front piece. Then sew the other side of the side piece to the back piece. It will now look like figure H. Next, sew the other side piece. With the bag still wrong sides out, pin the bottom piece in place with the right sides facing inside the bag, being sure the magnetic closure is at the bottom end. Sew around the edges, stop ½"/12 mm before each corner, and back-tack. Then move on to the next side, starting where you left off, and repeat until you have sewn all four sides. See figure I. To sew the lining together, repeat this entire step from the beginning, but *leave a 7"/17-cm opening along a bottom seam in order to turn the bag right sides out in step 10.*

STEP 9: BASTE STRAPS AND FLAP TO OUTER BAG.

Turn the outer bag right sides out. Pin the strap ends to the sides, centering one strap end on each side piece. The raw edged ends of the strap should align with the raw edges of the outer bag rim with right sides facing. Stitch in place, ¼"/6 mm from the edge of the fabric. Pin the outer flap upside down to the back of the outer bag, with right sides facing. The raw edges of the flap and raw edges of the back of the outer bag should be aligned. Baste along the raw edges, ¼"/6 mm from the edge.

STEP 10: SEW IT ALL TOGETHER.

With the lining still wrong sides out and the outer bag right sides out, insert the outer bag into the lining so right sides are facing one another. Make sure the strap and flap are between the layers. Pin around and stitch ½"/12 mm from the edge. Clip any excess fabric and turn the bag right sides out through the opening in the lining. Topstitch the opening closed. Then press the top seam flat and edge stitch around the top of the bag.

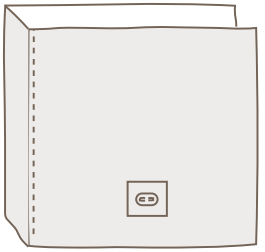


fig. H

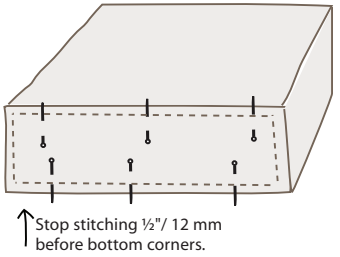


fig. I

How to: Zippered Pocket

A zippered pocket is a useful addition to any tote or handbag. The instructions here are for an 8"-/20-cm-wide, 6"-/15-cm-tall pocket accommodating a 7"/17-cm all-purpose zipper as used in the pleated satchel project, but the size can easily be adjusted. This is a simple pocket that is positioned on top of your lining.

1 With the zipper closed, align the bottom raw edge of the fabric piece with the edge of the zipper tape, the right side of the zipper and the right side of the fabric facing one another. Pin ½"/12 mm from either end to mark the beginning and end of your stitches. See figure A. With the zipper presser foot on your machine, stitch about ¼"/6 mm from the edge. If the pull of the zipper gets in your way, leave the needle in the down position and unzip the zipper to move the pull.

QUICK TIP: If you want to secure your fabric without pinning, you may find it helpful to use basting glue or adhesive tape.

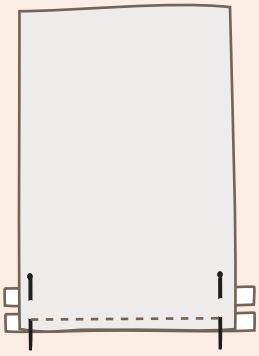


fig. A

fig. B

2 Fold down the fabric and press. Starting ½"/12 mm from the end of the fabric, topstitch along the fold, stopping ½"/12 mm from the end to leave room for your seam allowance. See figure B.

3 Fold the fabric up so the remaining raw edge on the 8"/20 cm side of the fabric is aligned with the other side of the zipper tape. Be sure the fabric edges are aligned on the sides. Repeat the process of stitching, folding, pressing, and topstitching, once again leaving a ½"/12-mm space for your seam allowance.

4 Trim the ends of the zipper tape that are longer than the fabric.

5 With the zipper closed and your pocket still *wrong sides out*, pin the pocket in place on the sides so there is 1"/2.5 cm of fabric above the zipper. Sew along one side with a ½"/12-mm seam allowance. Then *open the zipper halfway* and sew along the other side. See figure C. Turn right sides out, poke out the corners with a chopstick, and press flat.

QUICK TIP: You can often sew over the teeth of a small plastic zipper with no worries, but if you are using a metal or sport-style zipper, you will want to sew just up to the teeth, back-tack, then start again on the other side to avoid breaking a needle.

6 Attach the pocket to the lining of your bag or purse by sewing flat around all four sides.

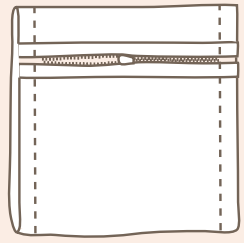


fig. C

CHAPTER 8

ACCESSORIES

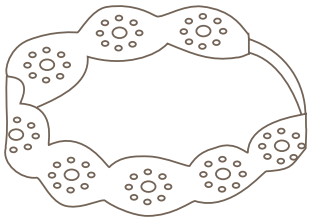
In this chapter, you'll make a headband, an apron, and a scarf inspired by vintage style. The headband is a modern take on eyelet—with a scalloped felt piece punched with holes to resemble the old-fashioned look of your grandmother's pillowcases. Next, you'll turn a vintage tea towel into an apron in a few simple steps and embellish the hem with a scalloped shell tuck edge. And, finally, you'll make a delicate lace-inspired scarf out of linen with cotton fabric yo-yos. After you've made these projects, you'll have some new techniques under your belt and will be able to come up with your own ways to re-interpret classic styles.

EYELET HEADBAND

This sweet felt headband features a traditional eyelet effect created simply with hole punches. Felt is a great sewing medium because you can cut it in any shape you want and it requires no hemming. But be sure to use a high-quality wool felt. This headband comes together so quickly, you can make one for all of your friends. With elastic at the back, the headband easily slides on and off for a quick and pretty accessory.

OPTIONS

- Make any type of headband in your choice of materials using these dimensions. Try cutting one from plain wool felt and sewing on your favorite trims.
- Use the hole-punched felt idea to make a necklace, bracelet, or other wool felt accessories.
- Add felt flowers, a patterned fabric backing, or other details to make it your own.
- Cut detailed eyelet designs into the felt using a craft knife.
- To fit a child's head, simply shorten the length by a few inches.
- Add beaded details to dress it up.



SUPPLIES

One 18"/46-cm square 2-mm wool felt (see note)

Sharp pencil

¼"/6-mm (standard-size) hole punch

⅛"/3-mm (mini) hole punch

6"/15 cm strip ½"/12 mm-wide elastic

Matching thread

NOTE: You only need an 18"-x-2"/46-cm-x-5-cm piece of felt for this project, but 2 mm felt is available in 18"-x-18"/46-cm-x-46-cm sheets. See Resources (page 165) for suggestions on where to buy 2 mm wool felt.

MULTIPLY YOUR SKILLS:
working with felt, cutout design

FINISHED DIMENSIONS:
1¼" x 19"–24"/3 cm x 48 cm–61 cm

STEP 1: CUT FELT.

Cut out the Eyelet Headband template from the pattern sheet included with this book. On the back side of the felt, trace the scalloped silhouette of the headband onto the felt and cut it out with a pair of small, sharp scissors.

STEP 2: TRACE AND PUNCH OUT DESIGN.

Using a sharp pencil, poke through the paper to mark the position of the holes. With the standard-size hole punch, punch out the center circles. Then use the mini hole punch to punch out the smaller outer circles. See figure A.

STEP 3: SEW ELASTIC.

Fold under the raw end of the elastic by ¼"/6 mm and sew it to one end of the back side of the felt piece using a straight stitch. See figure B. Try the headband on to adjust the fit, then fold under the other end of the elastic and sew it down to the opposite end of the felt piece.

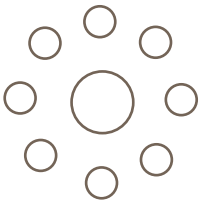


fig. A

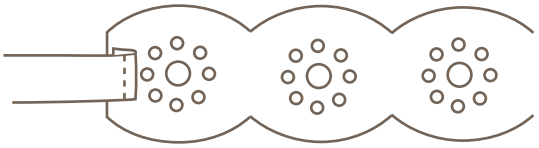


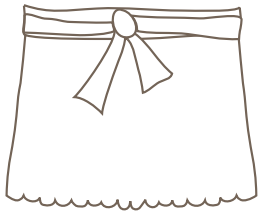
fig. B

TEA TOWEL APRON

This half-apron made from a vintage tea towel can be sewn together in just a few quick steps and makes a wonderful housewarming, hostess, or thank-you gift. The shell tuck edge adds a lovely scalloped detail to the hem. Any tea towel can be used, but remember that you'll be turning it on its side, so be sure to find one with a pattern that works horizontally. Inexpensive tea towels can be found at flea markets, online, or in your grandmother's closet!

OPTIONS

- Of course, you don't have to make this apron from a tea towel; you could make it from your favorite fabric or a plain linen or cotton with added embellishments such as embroidery, yo-yos, appliqué, or rickrack trim.
- Add some pockets following the seamless pocket instructions on page 20.
- Add texture with yarn embroidery following the outlines of your fabric design.
- Make a smaller version of this apron for kids.
- These instructions require you to piece together the strips to make the sash, making efficient use of your fabric; but you could try one long strip or even try a ribbon tie.



SUPPLIES

Vintage tea towel
½ yd/50 cm cotton fabric
Matching thread
Embroidery needle
Embroidery floss

Seam allowance: ½"/12 mm

MULTIPLY YOUR SKILLS:
shell tuck edge (see how-to), fabric ties

FINISHED DIMENSIONS:
18" x 16 ½"/46 cm x 42 cm
(not including sash length)

STEP 1: CUT FABRIC.

Turn the tea towel *horizontally* and cut if needed so that it is 20"/50 cm wide and 15"/38 cm tall (or less, depending on the size of your towel). Be sure to cut off both side hems, but leave the bottom hem intact. Next, cut three pieces of the cotton fabric for the sash, each measuring 5" x 30"/12 cm x 76 cm.

STEP 2: HEM SIDES OF APRON FRONT.

Fold and press the side edges of the tea towel by ½"/12 mm toward the wrong side of the fabric. Fold and press again by ½"/12 mm. Sew the hems down ⅜"/1 cm from the edge.

STEP 3: MAKE SASH.

Sew the ends of the long strips right sides together to form one long strip. Press the seams open. Fold and press the ends of the sash toward the wrong side of the fabric by ½"/12 mm. Then fold and press the entire length with both raw edges ½"/12 mm toward the wrong side of the fabric. See figure A. Finally, fold and press the entire strip in half lengthwise so that no raw edges are exposed.

STEP 4: SEW PIECES TOGETHER.

Insert the apron front piece into the opening of the sash, centered, with ½"/12 mm of the top edge inside the sash fold. Pin in place. Topstitch around the entire apron sash, ⅛"/3 mm from the edge, as shown in figure B.

STEP 5: SEW SHELL TUCK DECORATIVE EDGE.

Follow the how-to instructions to sew the shell tuck edge along the bottom hem with the embroidery needle and floss.

fig. A

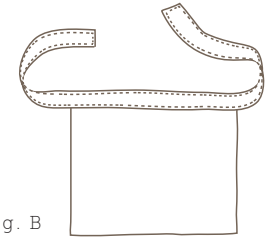


fig. B

How-to: Shell Tuck Edge

A shell tuck edge is a decorative stitch that can be added to hems on blankets, collars, cuffs, or any edge for a scalloped effect. These instructions start with the already hemmed edge.

1 Working on the wrong side of the fabric, take a stitch into the fold at your starting point, catching a bit of the fabric below. Pull back through on the fold and then take two more stitches on the fold at the same point to secure the thread. See figure A.

2 Insert the needle into the fold and pull the thread through the fold by ½"/12 mm. You will not sew through the front of the fabric in this step. See figure B. (For smaller scallops, take shorter stitches.)

3 Bring the thread over the fold to the front side and insert back up through the edge of the fold at the insertion point. Pull the thread taut to form the scallop. See figure C. Repeat steps 1 through 3.

4 When you have finished the edging, secure the thread by taking a couple of stitches into the fold, catching the front of the fabric, then tie it off.

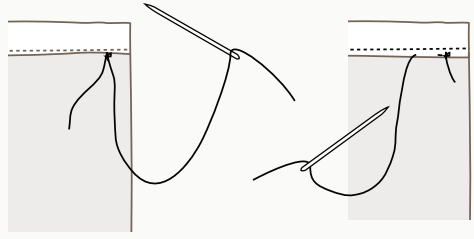


fig. A

fig. B

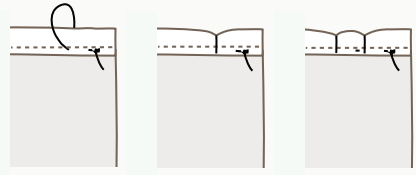


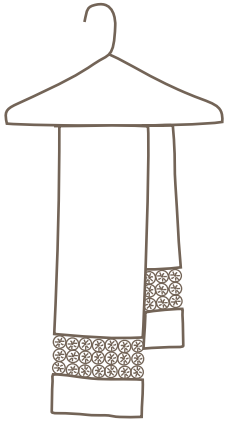
fig. C

YO-YO SCARF

Made from linen with cotton fabric yo-yo rosettes, this breezy summer scarf will add a touch of nostalgia to your wardrobe. The project is simple to make and fun; once you start making fabric yo-yos, you'll want to add them to all your projects. Though the process itself isn't difficult, the task of making many yo-yos can be time-consuming—so set aside time to relax and do some hand sewing. The scarf is made with a tiny rolled hem, which is a great technique to use on sheer fabrics or for projects that require a small hem.

OPTIONS

- Though this scarf measures 7"/17 cm wide, you can adjust it to suit your preference for a narrow or wide scarf.
- If you don't have the time or inclination to sew forty-two fabric yo-yos, try increasing the size of the yo-yo, making the scarf narrower, or making fewer rows.
- Make the linen pieces from patterned fabric or use fabric scraps for the yo-yo sections.



SUPPLIES

¼ yd/25 cm cotton fabric

1½ yd/1.5 m lightweight linen fabric

Sewing gauge

Matching thread

Hand-sewing needle

Seam allowance: ¼"/6 mm

MULTIPLY YOUR SKILLS:
fabric yo-yos (see how-to), hand-sewn piecing, basic scarf pattern, narrow rolled hem

FINISHED DIMENSIONS:
7" x 72"/17 cm x 183 cm

STEP 1: CUT FABRIC.

Cut the Yo-yo Scarf template from the pattern sheet included with this book and use it to cut 42 circles from the cotton fabric. Fold the fabric and cut multiples as you work, making sure to cut the circles close to one another to get all 42 circles from ¼ yd/25 cm of fabric, if not using scraps.

Cut the linen according to the following dimensions:

Center piece: 8" x 52"/20 cm x 132 cm
End pieces: 8" x 8 ½"/20 cm x 21.5 cm (cut 2)

STEP 2: MAKE FABRIC YO-YOS.

Follow the how-to instructions on the facing page to make the fabric yo-yos, using long stitches to make a smaller hole in the center.

STEP 3: HEM SCARF EDGES.

Working with the large center piece of the scarf, fold and press all four edges down ¼"/6 mm, then ¼"/6 mm again. The sewing gauge is helpful here. Follow the instructions for mitered corners on page 18, beginning from step 2. Stitch along the folded hem, ⅛"/3 mm from the edge. Repeat this process with the two smaller pieces of fabric so that you have three pieces of fabric with finished edges on all sides.

QUICK TIP: You can make quick work of the tiny hem by using a rolled hem presser foot. These are inexpensive and will allow you to skip the tedious folding and pressing.

STEP 4: SEW YO-YO SECTIONS.

Thread the hand-sewing needle and tie a knot at the end. Insert the needle into the center hole of one yo-yo, as shown in figure A, and bring the needle through to the side of the yo-yo, as shown in figure B. This will pull your knot inside the yo-yo. Stitch into the next yo-yo and make a few stitches to secure the yo-yos together. See figure C. Then pull the needle through the second yo-yo to connect to the third. Repeat this process, until you have a row of seven pieced together. See figure D. Repeat this until you have three rows consisting of seven yo-yos each. Sew the rows to one another in the same manner, just working in the opposite direction. You will make two sets of pieced yo-yos, with three rows in each set.

STEP 5: SEW PIECED YO-YO SECTIONS TO SCARF PIECES.

With the large scarf piece and a section of pieced yo-yos, thread your needle and insert it into the center of a corner yo-yo. Come out at the edge of the yo-yo (as when joining into rows) and stitch to the scarf a couple of times, then tuck your thread back into the same yo-yo and move along through the center of the next one, hiding your thread inside the fabric. See figure E. Repeat until you have connected all the yo-yos in that row to the scarf. Then, with a smaller scarf piece, connect the other side of the yo-yo section in the same manner. Repeat for the other end of the scarf, sewing the other yo-yo section to both the main scarf piece and the remaining small scarf piece.

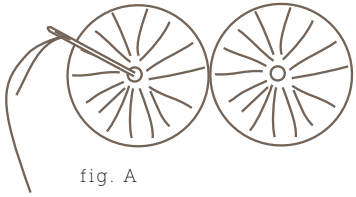


fig. A

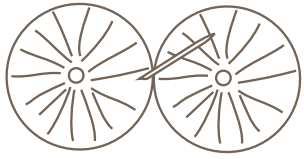


fig. B

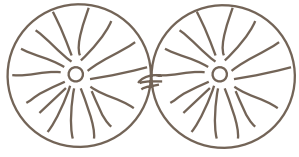
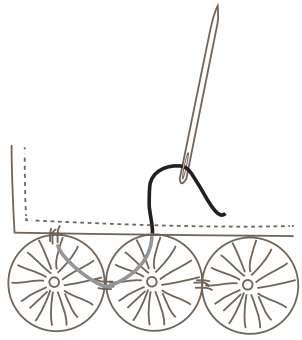


fig. C

fig. D



Gray line indicates where thread will be inside the fabric yo-yos.

fig. E

How-to: Make a Yo-yo

Fabric yo-yos can add a sweet vintage touch to your projects. You can add a yo-yo as an embellishment for bags, clothing, or accessories. Try them on holiday ornaments, headbands, or necklaces, or you can even make an entire quilt of yo-yos. Yo-yos are made by hand, but you can also use a plastic yo-yo making tool to help guide your stitches.

1 Determine the size you want your finished yo-yo to be, then use a compass to create a circle template double that size, plus ½"/12 mm. Trace the circle onto the back side of the fabric and cut it out.

2 Thread a needle with enough thread to go around the entire circumference of the circle.

3 Holding the circle wrong side up, fold down a bit of the edge by ¼"/6 mm and begin stitching leaving your knot on the top of the fabric, as shown in figure A.

QUICK TIP: Longer stitches will gather to make a smaller opening at the center, while smaller stitches create a wider opening.

4 Continue stitching around the edge, folding as you work. See figure B.

5 When you reach the end, gently pull the thread until the fabric gathers to form the yo-yo. Add a couple of stitches to secure your gathers, then tie off the thread and tuck it inside.

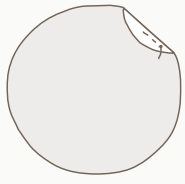


fig. A

fig. B

CHAPTER 9

REVERSIBLE FOR KIDS

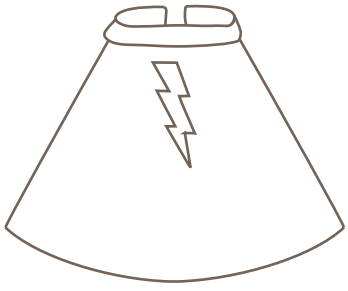
If you're going to take the time to sew, isn't it better to get two projects out of one? This chapter focuses on the little ones with three playful, reversible projects. Make a superhero cape that can be flipped for imaginative play, a smock for painting and cooking, and a reversible girl's skirt. The projects feature techniques such as linoleum block printing, embroidery, double-fold binding, and rickrack trim. Once you've made these three reversible projects, you just might want all of your sewing projects to be reversible.

PLAY YOUR WAY CAPE

A simple reversible cape lets your little one play prince or hero, depending on the mood of the day. Made from washable cotton and with a hook and loop fastener so kids can take it on and off by themselves, this cape will become a staple of your child's dress-up box. The cape will fit most children between ages 3 and 7, but the size could be adjusted easily. The emblems are printed onto the fabric with a simple linoleum block printing technique.

OPTIONS

- Turn this into a cape for a magician, princess, superhero, robot, or whatever children can imagine.
- Have your child draw his own design directly onto the linoleum block and help you print it onto the fabric.
- Make the design more intricate with a name (remember to carve in mirror image), designs, flowers, or other details.
- Skip the printing and create a design with appliqué, embroidery, or freezer paper stencils.



MULTIPLY YOUR SKILLS:
reversible pattern, hook and loop fastener, linoleum block printing, basic cape pattern

FINISHED DIMENSIONS:
23"/58 cm wide at the collar,
35"/89 cm wide at the bottom,
29"/74 cm long

SUPPLIES

FOR LINOLEUM BLOCK PRINTING (SEE NOTE)

Two 8"-x-10"/20-cm-x-25-cm or larger unmounted linoleum pieces

Pen or pencil

Fabric marker

Linoleum carving tools

Fabric block printing ink

Bench hook/inking plate or a flat surface for spreading the ink

Brayer (roller for applying paint)

Fabric scrap (for test print; optional)

Baren or a sturdy drinking glass to press the image onto fabric

NOTE: Most art supply stores offer basic printing kits with all the necessary supplies.

FOR CAPE

1 yd/1 m cotton fabric A

1 yd/1 m cotton fabric B

Matching threads

2"/5 cm 1"-/2.5-cm-wide (Velcro) hook and loop fastener

Chopstick

Seam allowance: ½"/12 mm

LINOLEUM BLOCK PRINTING INSTRUCTIONS

STEP 1: CUT FABRIC.

With the fabric folded in half along the grain, cut out both cape fabrics approximately 18" x 30"/ 46 cm x 76 cm, according to figure A. With a fabric marker, mark the placement of the print on the right side of each piece of fabric in the center, 12"/30.5 cm from the top.

STEP 2: TRACE DESIGNS ONTO LINOLEUM.

Cut out the Play Your Way Cape lightning bolt and crown templates from the pattern sheet included with this book. Trace each design onto a linoleum block using a pen or pencil.

STEP 3: CARVE DESIGNS.

Use caution and be sure to carve away from yourself. Using the carving tools, carve around the line of one design. Continue to carve out the rest of the block *outside* of the design to create negative space, but leave your design in positive. If you have too much excess linoleum in the background, you can simply cut a portion of it with a carving tool or use a pair of utility scissors to cut out the shape in its entirety. Repeat for the other design.

QUICK TIP: If you find the linoleum difficult to carve, you can try warming it up a bit. With your iron set to its lowest temperature, place a rag over the linoleum and move the iron around until the linoleum piece becomes more pliable.

STEP 4: ROLL INK ONTO LINOLEUM.

Squeeze a dollop of ink onto the inking plate or your flat surface. Use the brayer to spread the ink around until it evenly covers the roller and makes a sticky sound as you roll. Roll the ink onto the linoleum, covering the surface. Make a test print on paper or a piece of scrap fabric.

STEP 5: PRINT ONTO FABRIC.

Roll again and carefully place the inked linoleum face down onto fabric A, centered on your mark. Apply pressure with the baren, if using. Alternately, use your hands or the bottom of a drinking glass to achieve even pressure. Remove the linoleum and allow the fabric to dry for 24 hours before sewing. Heat set the ink if required, according to the paint manufacturer's instructions. Repeat steps 4 and 5 with the other design on fabric B.

SEWING INSTRUCTIONS

STEP 1: CUT FABRIC.

If you skipped the printing step, you will now need to cut both fabrics according to figure A.

STEP 2: ATTACH HOOK AND LOOP FASTENER.

Pin one side of the hook and loop fastener to fabric A in the upper left corner, on the right side of the fabric. The fastener should be positioned 1"/2.5 cm from the three edges. See figure B. Sew around the edge of the fastener with a straight stitch. Then repeat with the other piece of fabric, sewing the other side of the fastener *again in the left corner.*

STEP 3: SEW TOGETHER.

Pin the cape pieces right sides together and sew around as shown in figure C, leaving a 8"/20-cm opening at the top to turn the cape right sides out. Clip corners and trim away excess fabric.

STEP 4: TURN OUT AND FINISH.

Turn the cape right sides out and push out the corners with a chopstick all along the top. Press the top edge of the collar flat and edge stitch, closing the opening. Be sure that the bobbin thread matches the reverse side of the cape.

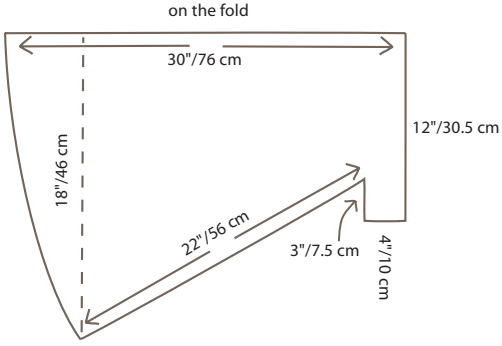


fig. A

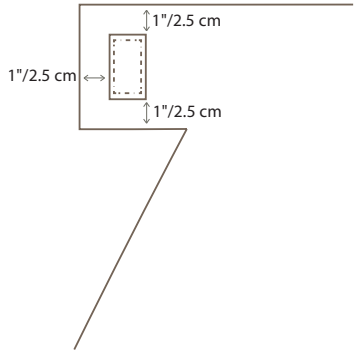


fig. B

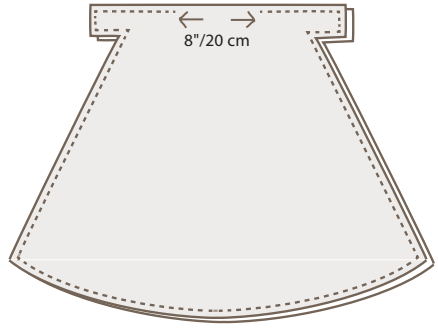


fig. C

CHANGE YOUR MIND SKIRT

Little girls sometimes change their minds, don't they? This reversible skirt gives you two options to satisfy even the most fickle child. Plus, when you're out and about and your little one drips ice cream on her skirt, you can simply flip it over and—voilà!—a clean skirt. With rickrack trim between the layers and a nice gather, this skirt is both sweet and simple. Though it is designed for sizes 4, 5, and 6, you can adjust the size by simply adding or subtracting an inch from the dimensions.

OPTIONS

- Add your own embellishments, such as appliqué, fabric yo-yos, piping, embroidered ribbon, crocheted lace, or whatever suits your style.
- Make it with shiny fabric on one side and sheer on the other and you have a great princess or dress-up skirt.
- Give the skirt a pocket or two for gathering acorns and stashing tiny toys, or add an apron front for an old-fashioned look.
- Make it an outfit by sewing a matching appliqué to a tee shirt.

SUPPLIES

½ yd/50 cm cotton fabric A

½ yd/50 cm cotton fabric B

Matching thread

24"/60 cm
¾"-/2-cm-wide elastic

1½ yd/1.5 m rickrack trim

NOTE: The fabric should have a dark background so that the other pattern doesn't show through the skirt, or you can use lightweight interfacing or muslin between the layers. Test your fabrics by holding them back-to-back to gauge the weight of the skirt and make sure it is opaque.

Seam allowance: ½"/12 mm, except where noted

MULTIPLY YOUR SKILLS:
elastic casing,
trim between fabric layers

FINISHED LENGTH:
size 4: 12"/30.5 cm
size 5: 13"/33 cm
size 6: 14"/35.5 cm

STEP 1: CUT FABRIC.

Cut one of each fabric according to the following dimensions:

Size 4: 13" x 36"/33 cm x 91.5 cm
Size 5: 14" x 38"/35.5 cm x 96.5 cm
Size 6: 15" x 40"/38 cm x 101.5 cm

STEP 2: JOIN FABRICS.

Sew fabrics right sides together on one long side to form the top of the waistband, as shown in figure A.

STEP 3: MAKE FABRIC TUBE.

Open the joined piece and press the seam open. Fold the piece right sides together widthwise, aligning the seams, and sew it together, forming a fabric tube. See figure B. Press the seam open.

STEP 4: PRESS HEM.

Press the top and bottom remaining raw edges toward the wrong side of the fabric by ½"/12 mm. This will form your hem in step 7. Pull one skirt fabric down onto the other so wrong sides are together and right sides facing out. Press flat at the top of the waistband where the two fabrics are joined and pin around to hold the waistband together for the next step.

STEP 5: MAKE ELASTIC CASING.

Change your bobbin thread to match the skirt before you begin this step. Beginning just after the seam, sew the elastic casing 1"/2.5 cm from the top edge of the waistband. You'll be sewing inside the fabric tube on the right side of the fabric. Sew all the way around until you almost reach the seam again, leaving a 1"/2.5-cm opening to insert the elastic.

STEP 6: INSERT ELASTIC.

Attach a safety pin to the end of your elastic and secure it closed with a piece of tape, which will prevent the safety pin from opening as you feed it through the casing. Insert the elastic *between the two skirt layers* through the opening, pulling the safety pin along through the fabric to the other side. See figure C. Be sure to keep the elastic straight and not twisted. Pin in place and adjust for a proper fit. Place one end of the elastic on top of the other and sew it together with a zigzag stitch. Trim the excess. Then close the opening in the elastic casing from the right side of the fabric with a straight stitch, continuing the line of your casing stitch.

QUICK TIP: When you are inserting elastic in a casing, it's helpful to pin the back end of your elastic to your fabric so you don't pull it through the hole.

STEP 7: FINISH HEM.

Press along the hem. Starting at the seam, insert the rickrack trim between the layers, positioning it so that half of the trim is visible for a scalloped effect. When beginning to insert the trim, fold up the raw-edged end as shown in figure D. Continue to pin the rickrack trim around the hem and fold it up between the fabric layers again when you reach the end. Edge stitch around the hem, ⅛"/3 mm from the edge. See figure E.

fig. A

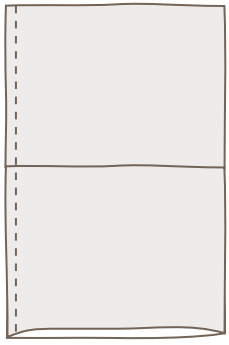


fig. B

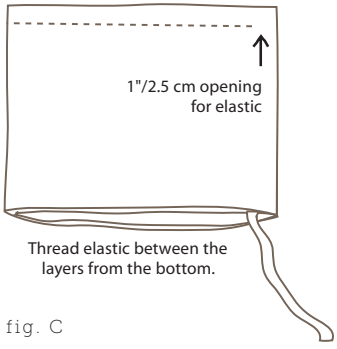


fig. C

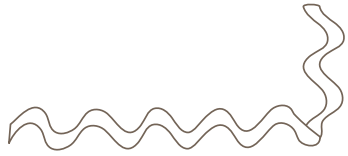


fig. D

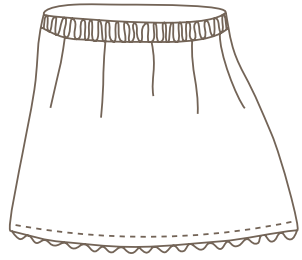


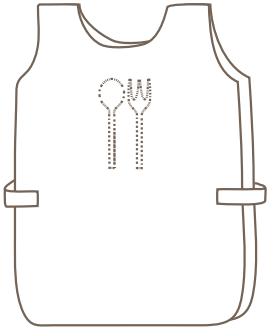
fig. E

MIX IT UP SMOCK

Whether your child is cooking in the kitchen or painting at the easel, this reversible smock will keep her protected from messes. The smock has a different embroidery design sewn on each side and features a convenient front closure. With this project, you'll build on your skills by stitching the embroidery design, and using bias binding at the neckline.

OPTIONS

- Make the smock with a waterproof coated cotton on one side and plain cotton on the other.
- Instead of the embroidery designs, use patterned fabrics that suit the kitchen and art themes.
- Pair this smock with paintbrushes or kitchen tools for a child's gift.
- If you are feeling ambitious, add binding to all the edges of the smock—you could even add pockets with binding.



SUPPLIES
FOR SMOCK

½ yd/50 cm cotton fabric A

½ yd/50 cm cotton fabric B

½ yd/50 cm (or less with joined pieces) cotton fabric for bias binding

Sturdy drinking glass or other circular object

Fabric marker

8"/20 cm 1"-/2.5-cm-wide (Velcro) hook and loop fastener

Matching thread

FOR EMBROIDERY

Embroidery tracing paper

6"/15-cm embroidery hoop

Embroidery needle

Embroidery floss

Seam allowance: ½"/12 mm

MULTIPLY YOUR SKILLS:
double-fold binding (see how-to), basic smock pattern, hook and loop fastener

FINISHED DIMENSIONS:
15" x 19"/38 cm x 48 cm

STEP 1: CUT FABRIC.

Cut a 16" x 40"/40.5 cm x 101.5 cm piece from fabric A and fold it in half widthwise. Cut out the Mix It Up Smock bodice template from the pattern sheet included with this book and pin it along the top of the fold, as shown in figure A. This template is just for the neck and armholes of the bodice; *the fabric should extend below the template by 12"/30.5 cm as shown.* Next, place a drinking glass or circular object in each bottom corner and trace around it with a fabric marker. Cut around the line to form a rounded corner, also shown in figure A. Cut fabric B in the same manner.

Cut the Velcro into four 2"/5-cm pieces.

Cut four pieces of fabric to 2½" x 8"/6 cm x 20 cm for the side straps. You can use either fabric for the straps, or a third contrasting fabric as pictured here.

STEP 2. MAKE BINDING.

Make the binding according to the how-to instructions for double-fold machine binding.

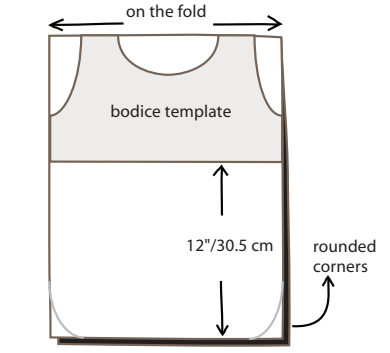


fig. A

fig. B

STEP 3: EMBROIDER FABRIC.

Using one of the patterns and the embroidery tracing paper, trace the design onto the center front of fabric A. The design should be centered, with the top of the design 3"/7.5 cm below the neckline. Place the fabric in the embroidery hoop and stitch the design using a backstitch (see page 160). Repeat with the other embroidery design on fabric B.

STEP 4: MAKE STRAPS.

Sew two strap pieces right sides together, stitching around three sides as shown in figure B. Clip the corners, turn right sides out, and press flat. Repeat this step to form the other strap. Then pull apart two pieces of Velcro and fold one looped piece (soft side) of Velcro over the closed end of the strap so that 1"/2.5 cm is on the front and 1"/2.5 cm is on the back. Pin in place and sew. See figure C. Repeat with the other strap, again sewing a *looped side* of Velcro to the strap.

STEP 5: SEW FASTENER TO SMOCK FRONT PIECES.

With one hooked side (rough side) of a Velcro piece, pin and sew to the right side of fabric A, perpendicular to the edge, 3"/7.5 cm from the bottom of the shoulder contour and ¾"/2 cm from the edge. Repeat on the other side. See figure D. Then repeat for fabric B, again sewing two *hooked sides* to the front of the fabric.

STEP 6: SEW FABRICS TOGETHER.

With fabric A right sides up and unfolded, lay fabric B face down on top so that right sides are together. Insert the straps 3"/7.5 cm from the bottom of the shoulder opening on the back side of the smock, with raw ends aligned at the edges of the fabric and the Velcro side facing inward. Pin all layers together. Sew around the perimeter, leaving an opening at the neck hole. See figure E. Trim excess fabric and clip around the bottom curves. Turn right sides out through the neck hole and press.

STEP 7: ATTACH BINDING AT NECK OPENING.

Follow the how-to instructions for double-fold binding.

fig. C

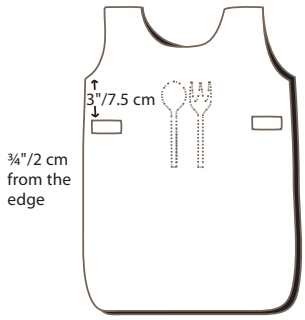
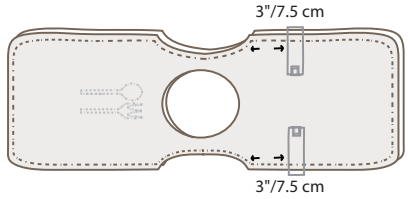


fig. D



Straps will be *between* the fabric layers.

fig. E

How-to: Double-Fold Machine Binding

Double-fold binding works well for curved fabrics or for the edges of quilts that will endure a lot of wear and tear. These instructions are for ½"/12-mm wide double-fold binding that is cut on the bias, giving it enough stretch to sew around curves.

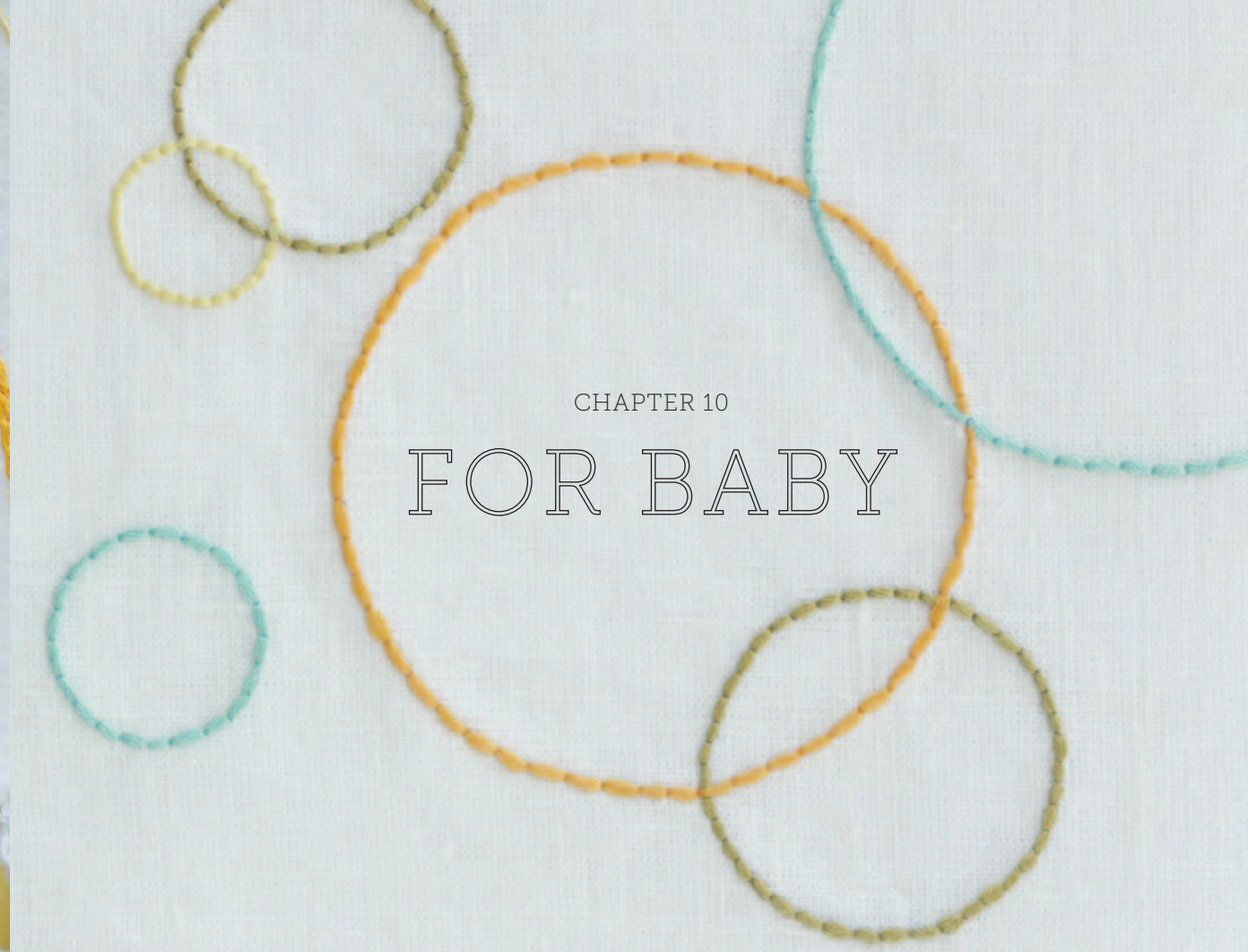
1 Cut your fabric strips on the bias (at a 45-degree angle). For the smock project, you will need about 30"/76 cm of binding cut into a 3½"/9-cm strip. If you cannot cut a single length of binding in one piece, you will need to join the pieces together as shown in the single-fold binding instructions on page 62. Fold the binding in half lengthwise and press along the fold.

2 Next, you will attach the binding the same way that you would single-fold binding. Align the raw edges of your folded binding with the raw edges of the right side of the fabric and pin it in place. Begin pinning in a spot that will show the least, and never on a corner.

3 Leaving a 2"/5-cm tail at the beginning of the binding, begin sewing the binding ½"/12 mm from the raw edges. Work slowly on curves. When you have almost sewn around, stop 2"/5 cm from the starting point.

4 Unfold the fabric at the two ends and with a fabric marker or chalk, mark a line on each piece where the binding should meet. Pull up the ends, lay them together, and sew them along these lines. Clip the excess fabric and press the seam open. Fold the binding back together and lay flat again, pressing in place. Continue to stitch down the remainder of the binding.

5 Fold the binding over to the reverse side and pin it in place from the front, making sure that the binding is ½"/12 mm on the front side. Sew on the front of your fabric, in the ditch (on top of the seam), catching the back of the binding as you sew.



CHAPTER 10

FOR BABY

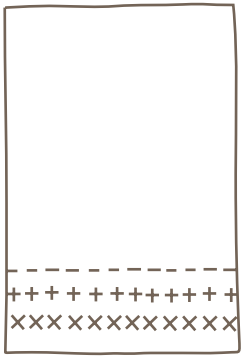
Give some handmade goodness to a baby in your life. The projects in this chapter provide the basic patterns to make burp cloths, a bib, and a baby blanket—patterns that can be used time and again. These simple stitches will get you started with hand embroidery if you've never tried it before. If you're an expert, then you'll enjoy designing your own creations. The best thing about embroidery is that there is no wrong way to do it, as long as you get the desired effect. In this chapter, you'll build on your skills by learning seven basic embroidery stitches as well as basic patterns for baby items. The fabrics shown here are all organic—soft flannel with printed cotton on the reverse.

SAMPLER BURP CLOTHS

The simple stitching on this burp cloth adds a sweet handmade touch, while the organic flannel and cotton is soft and cozy for baby. Pair a burp cloth with another baby item from this chapter or make multiple versions backed with different fabrics. This burp cloth is reversible, so it is pretty on both sides. And this cloth is just the right size to become baby's favorite snuggle item, as burp cloths often do.

OPTIONS

- Add trims, embroider a name, or sew an appliqué.
- Vary your fabric choice.
- To add more detail, make the corners rounded or the bottom edge scalloped.
- This burp cloth can be made from two fat quarters of fabric, so you can use your favorite pattern to back the flannel.



SUPPLIES
FOR ONE BURP CLOTH

18" x 22"/46 cm x 56 cm organic cotton flannel

18" x 22"/46 cm x 56 cm organic cotton fabric

Fabric marker

6"/15-cm embroidery hoop

Embroidery needle

Embroidery floss

Matching thread

Chopstick

Seam allowance: ½"/12 mm

MULTIPLY YOUR SKILLS:
embroidery running stitch (see page 161), cross stitch (see page 161), and inverted cross stitch (see page 161)

FINISHED DIMENSIONS:
13" x 17"/33 cm x 43 cm

STEP 1: CUT FABRIC.

Cut one of each fabric to 14" x 18"/35.5 cm x 46 cm.

STEP 2: EMBROIDER DESIGN.

With a water-soluble fabric marker, draw a line across the front of the flannel piece, 3"/7.5 cm from the bottom raw edge. Place the fabric in an embroidery hoop and thread the needle with four strands of embroidery floss. For this design, you will use a running stitch, a cross stitch, and an inverted cross stitch. See Basic Embroidery Stitches (page 160) for detailed stitch instructions. Tie a knot at the back of the fabric and sew a running stitch across the marked line. The stitches in this design are approximately ¼"/6 mm apart. You will need to re-hoop as you work across the fabric, then tie off at the end. Continue with the stitch progression, moving down from your first row of stitches. See figure A.

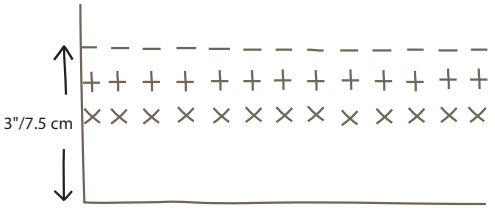


fig. A

STEP 3: SEW TOGETHER.

Pin the two fabrics right sides together. Sew around the edges, leaving a 4"/10-cm opening at the top as indicated in figure B. Trim the excess fabric and clip at the corners. Pull through the opening and turn right sides out. Gently push out the corners with a chopstick. Press and pin the opening closed. Edge stitch along the top from corner to corner, as shown in figure C.

fig. B

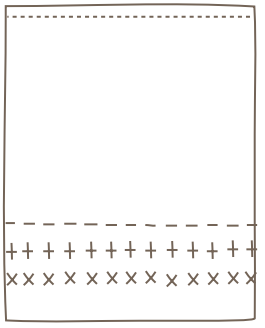


fig. C

INITIAL BLANKET

This personalized swaddling blanket is the perfect addition to a newborn's layette and makes a wonderful baby-shower gift. Here you'll build on your embroidery experience from the Sampler Burp Cloths project with two new stitches. The blanket is made of soft organic flannel on one side and printed organic cotton on the reverse, and features a custom initial and a blanket stitch around the edge for added detail.

OPTIONS

- Substitute the blanket stitch with crocheted or rickrack trim; stitch a full name or three initials; or add a colorful appliqué.
- Use fabrics that match the nursery, or try all solids for a simple approach.
- If you want to make this without the backing fabric, simply hem the edges of your flannel using mitered corners (see page 18) and sew the blanket stitch over the hem.
- Make this blanket any size to fit your needs. Still using a yard of each fabric, you can make a larger blanket by turning it from a square to a rectangle. Or with your extra fabric, you can make some smaller burp cloths to match the blanket.

SUPPLIES

1 yd/1 m organic cotton flannel
1 yd/1 m organic cotton fabric
Round-bottom drinking glass or other circular object
Water-soluble fabric marker
6"/15 cm embroidery hoop
Embroidery needle
Embroidery floss or pearl cotton
Matching thread

Seam allowance: ½"/12 mm

MULTIPLY YOUR SKILLS:
embroidery backstitch (see page 160), blanket stitch (see page 160)

FINISHED DIMENSIONS:
35" x 35"/89 cm x 89 cm

e

STEP 1: CUT FABRIC.

Cut one of each fabric to 36" x 36"/91.5 cm x 91.5 cm. Using a drinking glass or other circular object, round your corners by placing the glass at each corner and tracing around the outside of the circle. Cut along your line.

STEP 2: EMBROIDER INITIAL.

In the bottom right corner of the flannel piece, measure 4"/10 cm from each edge and mark this center point with a fabric marker. Draw a letter with a fabric marker, as shown in figure A. It should be about 4"/10 cm wide. Place this section in the embroidery hoop and thread the needle with embroidery floss or pearl cotton. Stitch around with a backstitch. See Basic Embroidery Stitches (page 160) for detailed stitching instructions.

QUICK TIP: If you don't feel comfortable drawing the letter freehand, you can print a large-scale letter on your computer in your favorite font, cut it out, and use it as a template.

STEP 3: SEW BLANKET TOGETHER.

With right sides facing, pin the two blanket pieces together, leaving a 6"/15-cm opening at the top, as shown in figure B. Trim excess fabric and notch around the corners by making small cuts perpendicular to the seam to ease the rounded corners. Turn right sides out and press the seams flat. Pin the opening closed.

STEP 4: SEW BLANKET STITCH.

Thread the needle with embroidery floss. Insert the needle between the fabric layers a few inches past the starting point, pull it back through to the starting point, make a tiny stitch or two at the edge of the fabric to secure it, and then begin the blanket stitch. See Basic Embroidery Stitches (page 160) for detailed stitching instructions. For this project, you'll need to change thread as you're working, so tie off by pulling the thread a couple of times through the last loop you made, then insert the needle between the fabric layers and pull it through a couple of inches. Pull it out again and snip off the end, which will hide the tail inside the blanket. Continue stitching around until you reach the end, then tie off in the same manner.

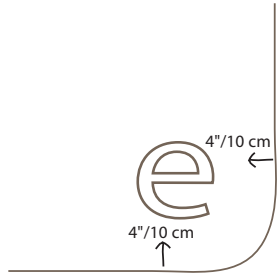


fig. A

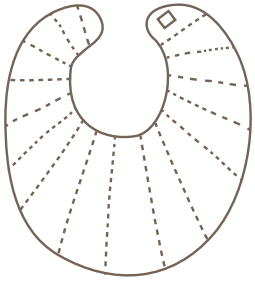
fig. B

SUNSHINE BIB

Make this reversible bib for the sunshine of your life. This is a simple project, with the embroidery taking the most time. Using some of the embroidery stitches from the previous projects in this chapter, plus a couple of new stitches, you will embroider in varying shades and widths. The completed design in shades of yellow and orange resembles rays of sunshine radiating from the center. Organic flannel and cotton fabrics provide the most natural materials for baby, while the hook and loop fastener allows the bib to go on and off easily.

OPTIONS

- If you don't want to do hand embroidery, you could make the stitches by machine.
- Bright colors would also work well to create a rainbow effect.
- Skip the stitching and use this bib pattern with your favorite fabric or even a waterproof coated cotton.
- Add an appliqué design, stitch the baby's name, or use a printing technique to customize it.
- If you have a baby who is always pulling off her bib, try using a snap closure.



SUPPLIES

18" x 22"/46 cm x 56 cm (fat quarter) organic cotton flannel

18" x 22"/46 cm x 56 cm (fat quarter) organic cotton fabric

Water-soluble fabric marker

Embroidery hoop

Embroidery needle

1 skein each 3 to 4 shades of embroidery floss in yellow and gold

1"/2.5-cm (Velcro) hook and loop fastener

Matching thread

Chopstick

Seam allowance: ½"/12 mm, except where noted

MULTIPLY YOUR SKILLS:
embroidery chain stitch (see page 160), stem stitch (see page 162)

FINISHED DIMENSIONS:
approximately 11" x 13"/ 28 cm x 33 cm

STEP 1: CUT AND TRACE.

Cut your front fabric to 16" x 14"/40.5 cm x 35.5 cm. Cut out the Sunshine Bib template from the pattern sheet included with this book and trace it onto your fabric using a water-soluble fabric marker, by tracing one half, then flipping the template to its mirror image to trace the other half. (*Be sure not to use an air erasing marker because you might not finish your embroidery before your lines are gone.)* Fold your fabric in half lengthwise and crease it to find the center. Make a mark 2"/5 cm from the neck of your bib and draw lines randomly from this point. See figure A.

STEP 2: EMBROIDER ALONG LINES.

Sew randomly ordered embroidery stitches in shades of yellow and orange along your lines. Use outline stitches such as the backstitch, running stitch, stem stitch, and chain stitch. Vary the thickness of the stitches by using different numbers of threads for each line. See Basic Embroidery Stitches (page 160) for detailed stitch instructions. Sew just to the edges of your bib outline and not beyond.

STEP 3: CUT FABRIC AND ADD FASTENER.

Cut around the bib pattern that you've drawn onto your fabric, being careful not to cut your embroidery knots. Then cut the backing fabric in the same shape. On the bib front, stay stitch 1/8"/3 mm from the edge to secure your embroidery stitches. On the right side of the fabric, sew one side of the hook and loop fastener to each bib piece at the upper right-hand side, placed according to the pattern template. See figure B.

STEP 4: SEW RIGHT SIDES TOGETHER.

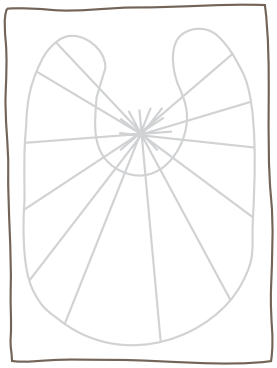
Pin and sew the front and back right sides together, leaving a 4"/10-cm opening at the neckline, as shown in figure C. Cut the excess fabric and notch along the curves.

STEP 5: TURN RIGHT SIDES OUT.

Turn the bib right sides out and gently push out all seams with a chopstick. Press flat, turning in the raw edges at the neck opening.

STEP 6: TOPSTITCH OPENING.

Pin and sew the opening closed with a topstitch 1/8"/3 mm from the edge, sewing all along the neckline. Be sure to change your bobbin thread to match your backing fabric.



Draw bib outline and the stitch lines with a fabric marker.

fig. A

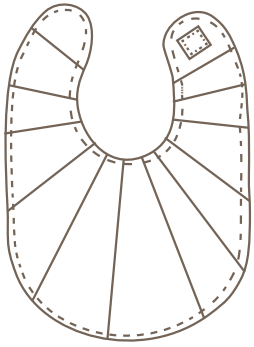


fig. B

Topstitch ⅛"/3 mm from edge. Sew velcro with a zigzag stitch.

fig. C

CHAPTER 11

BLOCKHEAD ANIMALS

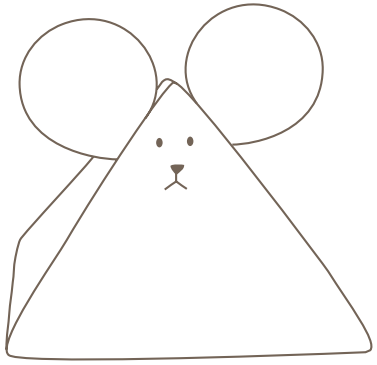
Fun for both the young and the young at heart, the simple blockhead shapes of these cuties make them a snap to sew. With a pincushion, puppets, and a stuffed animal, you'll learn the basics of plush construction and simple embroidery. All of the animals in this chapter can be made interchangeably, just by swapping the ears. Once you've sewn these three projects, you'll be comfortable sewing these types of animal shapes, and may be inspired to come up with your own cute creations.

MOUSE PINCUSHION

This pyramid-shaped mouse pincushion is useful, adorable, and simple to make. The three top sides provide enough surface area to store all of your straight pins; the ears can hold sewing needles; and the flat bottom allows the pincushion to sit upright beside you as you sew. The construction method for this pincushion involves folding one piece of fabric up to form a pyramid shape, similar to origami folding. In this project, you'll learn more simple embroidery, a hidden stitch, and tips for stuffing.

OPTIONS

- Switch out the ears to make other types of animals.
- Fill it with catnip to be used as a cat toy.
- To use your favorite patterned fabrics in patchwork, cut the template into four triangles and each side can be a different fabric.
- Make a larger version and fill it with rice to make a doorstop.
- Use braided trim, rickrack, twine, ribbon, yarn, or whatever you have on hand for the tail.
- Wool roving is used here for the stuffing because it packs tightly, but try using a filling of your choice.



SUPPLIES

9" x 8"/23 cm x 20 cm cotton fabric

Scrap piece contrasting cotton fabric for mouse ears

Fabric marker or tailor's chalk

Matching thread

Embroidery needle

Embroidery floss

6"/15 cm trim

1 oz wool roving

Chopstick

Seam allowance: ¼"/6 mm

MULTIPLY YOUR SKILLS:
inserting stuffing, ladder stitch, embroidered face

FINISHED DIMENSIONS:
3½" x 3½" x 3½"/
9 cm x 9 cm x 9 cm

STEP 1: CUT FABRIC.

Cut out the Mouse Pincushion templates from the pattern sheet included with this book. Using the templates, cut the large triangle and two ear pieces from the main fabric and two ear pieces from the contrasting fabric.

STEP 2: MARK FABRIC.

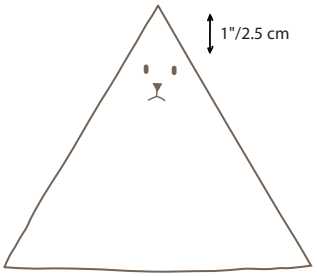
On the wrong side of the fabric, mark ¼"/6 mm from each tip of the triangle with a fabric marker or chalk. This will be your stopping point as you sew. Then, on the front of the fabric, draw the mouse's face about 1"/2.5 cm from a tip of the triangle. See figure A. Use the satin stitch and the backstitch to embroider the face. See Basic Embroidery Stitches (page 160) for detailed stitch instructions.

STEP 3: SEW EARS.

With right sides together, sew one ear piece front to one ear piece back. Clip the excess fabric and notch around the curve. Turn right sides out and press flat. Fold one bottom corner over less than ¼"/6 mm and stitch in place. See figure B. Repeat the process for the other ear, being sure to fold the *opposite* corner so the two ears will be symmetrical.

STEP 4: ATTACH EARS.

Place one ear at the top right of the triangle, right sides facing and about 1"/2.5 cm from the tip of the triangle. The fold of the ear should be facing the tip of the triangle. Stitch in place ⅛"/3 mm from the edge. See figure C. Then fold this ear out of the way and stitch the other ear in the same manner on the opposite side of the head.



Draw face 1"/2.5 cm from tip on the right side of the fabric.

fig. A

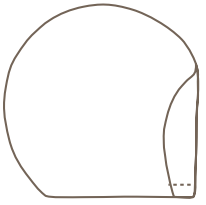


fig. B

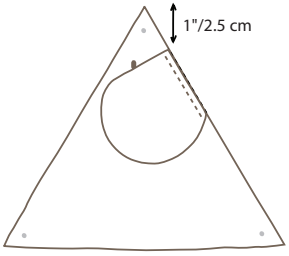


fig. C

STEP 5: SEW PINCUSHION TOGETHER.

Sewing this pincushion is a bit like origami folding. First, fold the bottom right corner up to align it with the top corner over the face and right ear. Move the left ear out of the way. Beginning at your mark ¼"/6 mm from the tip, begin sewing along the edge all the way to the bottom, as shown in figure D. Then fold the left corner up and repeat, being sure to again move the right ear out of the way. See figure E.

STEP 6: INSERT TAIL AND SEW BACK POINTS.

Finally, insert the trim strip for the tail on the *inside* of your pyramid shape with the raw edge protruding between the layers at the bottom point. Sew along the top and bottom of the back to close the corners, *leaving the center open* for turning and filling, as shown in figure F. Be sure to sew from your mark at the top so that all stitches meet at this top point on the pyramid.

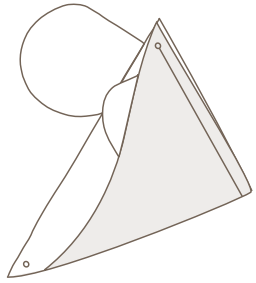


fig. D

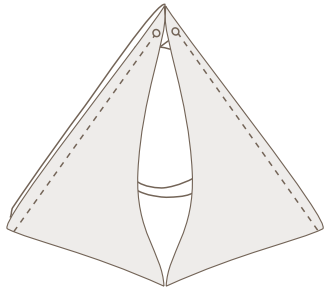


fig. E

STEP 7: OVERCAST AND TURN RIGHT SIDES OUT.

Sew an overcasting or zigzag stitch along all the seams (this is important as you will be stretching the seams with filling). Then turn the pincushion right sides out and gently push out the corners with a chopstick.

STEP 8: FILL WITH WOOL ROVING.

Pull the wool roving apart into small pieces and begin stuffing it into the hole, pushing with a chopstick as you work, making sure the filling gets into the corners and is evenly distributed. Pack the pincushion tightly with as much filling as possible.

STEP 9: HAND SEW OPENING CLOSED.

Pin the opening closed. Follow the how-to instructions (on page 55) to sew it together by hand using the ladder stitch.

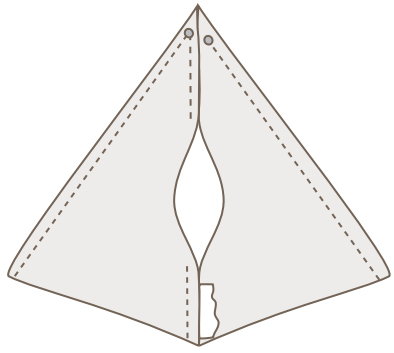


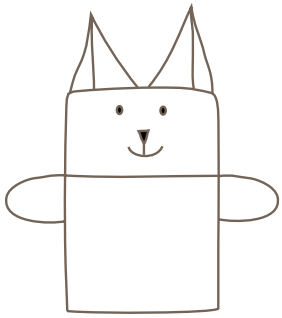
fig. F

BLOCKHEAD PUPPETS

These blockhead puppets will steal the show. Perfect for small hands, the puppets can be made into a bunny, mouse, and kitty. In order for children to slide their fingers inside the arms, the arms are inset in the same manner that you would add a sleeve to clothing. Repurposed wool suiting was used for the bodies, a simple cotton print for the clothes, and contrasting fabric for the ears. A quick embroidered face completes these happy critters.

OPTIONS

- Make your own animals by changing the ears or adding a few details. Try bears, sheep, or dogs.
- Make a set of these puppets for a sweet child's gift. You could pack them into a simple tote with a puppet-show curtain and some twine for hanging to create a traveling show.
- Make these completely from recycled materials such as old baby clothes, or try wool felt, linen, or your favorite fabric scraps.



SUPPLIES
FOR ONE PUPPET

10"/25-cm square 100 percent wool suiting fabric

10" x 11"/25 cm x 28 cm cotton print fabric

5" x 6"/12 cm x 15 cm (maximum) contrasting cotton print fabric for ears

Fabric marker or tailor's chalk

Embroidery needle

Brown embroidery floss

6"/15-cm embroidery hoop (optional)

Seam allowance: ¼"/6 mm

MULTIPLY YOUR SKILLS:
basic puppet pattern, notching curves, inset sleeves

FINISHED DIMENSIONS:
approximately 9" x 9"/
23 cm x 23 cm (from arm to arm)

STEP 1: CUT OUT FABRIC.

Cut out the Blockhead Puppet templates from the pattern sheet included with this book. Use the templates to cut out the fabric for the animal you are making for a total of 12 pieces as follows:

Body: cotton print (cut 2)
Head: wool suiting (cut 2)
Ears: wool suiting (cut 2) and contrasting cotton (cut 2)
Arms: wool suiting (cut 4)

STEP 2: EMBROIDER FACE.

You may choose to embroider the face after the puppet is finished or even before the fabric is cut. An embroidery hoop can be helpful but is not required. Draw the face onto your fabric with a fabric marker or chalk. Use a satin stitch for the eyes and nose and a backstitch for the mouth. See Basic Embroidery Stitches (page 160) for detailed stitch instructions. Press from the back of the fabric after you have sewn the face.

STEP 3: SEW BODY AND HEAD TOGETHER.

With right sides facing, sew the front body and head piece together, as shown in figure A. Repeat with the other pieces. Press the seams toward the darker fabric.

STEP 4: SEW ARMS.

With one front and one back arm piece, with right sides facing, sew around the outside, leaving an opening on the straight side. Repeat with the other two arm pieces. Clip the excess fabric and notch along the curves as shown in figure B. Turn right sides out and press both arms flat.

STEP 5: SEW EARS.

Sew the ear pieces right sides together, with one contrasting cotton piece sewn to each wool piece. Clip the point at the tip of the ears, turn them right sides out, and press flat. For the kitty, you will press flat in the opposite direction so the seam is in the center. For the bunny and mouse ears, fold over one opposite bottom corner of each ear ¼"/6 mm and sew it down. See figure C.

STEP 6: SEW TOGETHER.

Stack the layers together in the following order: front body and head piece right sides up, ear pieces *front sides down and upside down* aligned with the top edge, then back body and head piece right sides down. See figure D. Pin in place. With a fabric marker, draw a line from the bottom of the head piece down 1½"/4 cm where the arms will be placed. Sew around the edge, leaving an opening for the arms where marked. See figure E.

STEP 7: SEW ARMS BY HAND.

With the puppet still turned wrong sides out, insert one arm (right sides out) from the inside of the puppet into the armhole, just as you would insert a sleeve, aligning the raw edges of the arm with the raw edges of the puppet body at the opening. See figure F. Sew around the opening by hand with a running stitch two times, then do a quick overcast stitch by hand over the raw edges. Tie off. Repeat for the other arm.

STEP 8: HEM BOTTOM.

With the puppet still wrong sides out, fold and press the raw edge at the bottom of the patterned fabric toward the wrong side of the fabric by ⅜"/1 cm. Repeat the fold and press again. Sew along this seam with a ¼"/6-mm seam allowance. Turn the puppet right sides out and press.

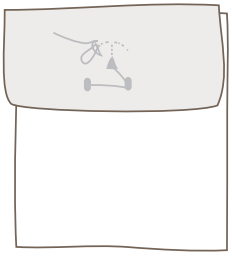


fig. A

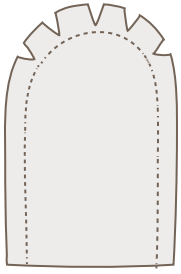


fig. B

fig. C

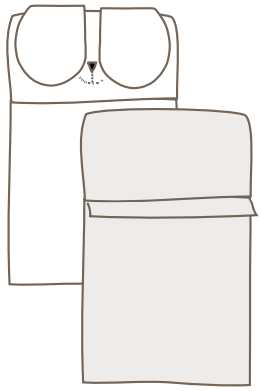


fig. D

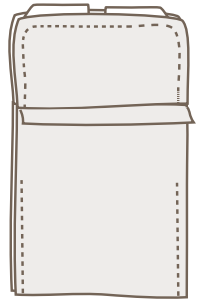


fig. E

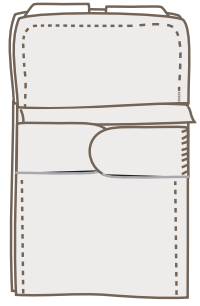


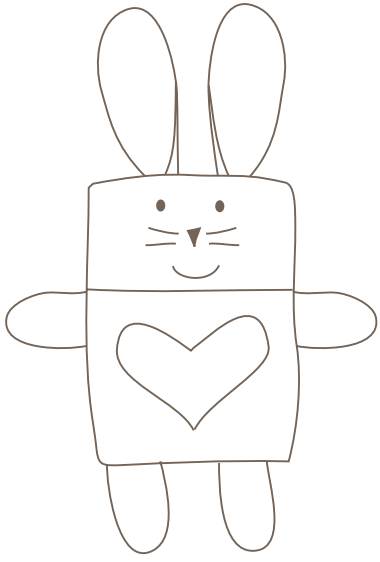
fig. F

BUNNY SOFTIE

This huggable square bunny will become your little one's new best friend. Like all of the other projects in this chapter, you can simply change the ears to make a different kind of animal. Here, you'll learn new skills by adding stuffed legs and arms to the basic block shape you made in the previous project. This bunny can be made from fabric scraps of wool and cotton. The heart appliqué is a sweet added embellishment.

OPTIONS

- Make this bunny in your favorite fabric, or try felted sweaters or fuzzy material for a softer feel.
- Make a family of bunnies in varying sizes and colors. Put them in a basket for the perfect child's gift.



SUPPLIES

¼ yd/25 cm wool suiting

18" x 22"/46 cm x 56 cm (fat quarter) cotton fabric

18" x 22"/46 cm x 56 cm (fat quarter) contrasting cotton fabric

¼ yd/25 cm heavy-weight fusible interfacing

12 oz bamboo fiberfill

Matching thread

Chopstick

Seam allowance: ½"/12 mm for body, ¼"/6 mm for smaller parts

MULTIPLY YOUR SKILLS:
ladder stitch (see page 55), embroidered face, stuffed animal construction

FINISHED DIMENSIONS:
15" x 12"/38 cm x 30.5 cm

STEP 1: CUT FABRIC.

Cut out the Bunny Softie template from the pattern sheet included with this book. Cut the fabrics and interfacing according to the templates for a total of 19 pieces. Follow the interfacing manufacturer's instructions to fuse the interfacing to the two cotton ear pieces.

STEP 2: EMBROIDER FACE.

Use the satin stitch and running stitch to embroider the face centered on the head piece, as shown in the pattern. See Basic Embroidery Stitches (page 160) for detailed stitch instructions.

STEP 3. SEW APPLIQUÉ HEART.

On the center front of one of the body pieces, sew the heart appliqué. You may use the raw-edge appliqué technique (see page 27), or turn under and press the edges, then hand sew or machine sew using the blind hem stitch (see page 162) or a zigzag stitch with invisible thread.

STEP 4: SEW EARS, LEGS, AND ARMS.

Pin one pair of ear pieces (one wool, one contrasting cotton) right sides together and sew around the outside edges with a ¼"/6-mm seam allowance, leaving an opening at the bottom. See figure A. Notch the curves on the ear, as shown in figure B. Turn right sides out and press flat. Repeat this step for the other ear, then sew together the arm and leg pieces in the same manner. With one ear, fold and press one bottom corner over ¼"/6 mm and stitch down, as shown in figure C. Repeat with the other ear, but with the fold on the opposite side.

STEP 5: SEW BODY PIECES.

With right sides together, sew the bottom of the front head piece to the top of the front body piece with a ½"/12-mm seam allowance. Press the seam open. Repeat with the back pieces, leaving a 3"/7.5-cm opening in the center to turn right sides out, as shown in figure D. Be sure to back-tack before and after the opening.

STEP 6: STUFF ARMS AND LEGS AND ATTACH BODY PARTS.

Stuff the arms and legs with filling, leaving enough room at the top to sew them down. Next, you will secure the ears, arms, and legs to make it easier to sew the bunny together in step 7. With the front of the bunny main fabric piece right sides up, pin the ears at the top upside down with the raw edges

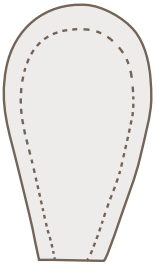


fig. A

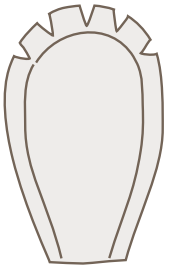


fig. B

fig. C

aligned with one another. Sew 1/8"/3 mm from the edge, as shown in figure E. Repeat with the arms and legs, again sewing 1/8"/3 mm from the edge just to secure these pieces for the next step. The arms should be positioned just below the seam and the legs should be centered at the bottom, with just less than 1"/2.5 cm between them.

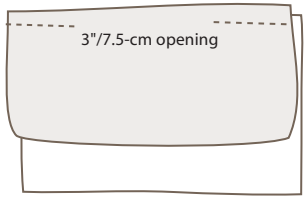


fig. D

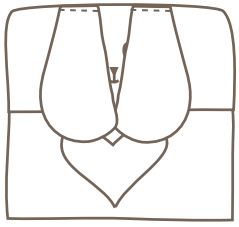


fig. E

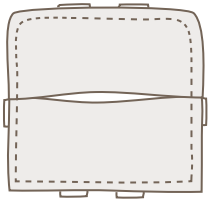


fig. F

STEP 7: SEW TOGETHER.

With legs, arms, and ears folded in toward the center, pin the front and back pieces right sides together and sew around with a ½"/12 mm seam allowance, as shown in figure F. Stitch slowly and reduce tension. Then, gently turn the bunny right sides out through the opening in the back to check that all the pieces are in their proper place. Adjust if needed. Then turn wrong sides out again and sew an overcasting or zigzag stitch around the seam. *Since your bunny will be stuffed, this is an important step because the stitching may be pulled.* Turn right sides out again.

QUICK TIP: For items that will endure a fair amount of wear and tear or projects that will be stuffed with filling, set your machine to sew with shorter stitches.

STEP 8: STUFF.

Using a chopstick, stuff the bunny with filling, being sure to pack it tightly into the corners. Continue to stuff until you no longer have puckers in the fabric.

STEP 9: HAND SEW OPENING CLOSED.

Follow the how-to instructions to hand sew the back opening closed in one direction using the ladder stitch (see page 55). Sew again back in the other direction. Make several loops with your thread at the end, then tuck the needle into the fabric and pull it through the other side of the bunny. Clip the thread.

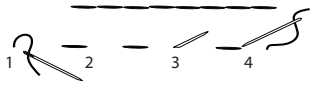
BASIC EMBROIDERY STITCHES

These simple stitches are a good introduction to basic embroidery and will add a handmade touch to your sewing projects. Create designs, monograms, edging, or simple stitches—or add a stitched outline to a fabric design giving a textural quality to your work. There are some excellent designs available now, adding a modern feel to a traditional art form. Remember one important thing about embroidery—there's no wrong way to do it! If you get the results you want, you can try any stitch imaginable.

DESIGN TRANSFER METHODS: There are many methods to transfer your design onto fabric. Designs can be drawn directly onto your fabric with a water-soluble fabric marker or charcoal, heat pressed with embroidery transfer paper, traced with carbon paper, or stitched right on top of tissue paper. You'll want to try different methods to find the one that works best for you.

EMBROIDERY THREAD: There are two main types of thread used in embroidery—pearl cotton and cotton embroidery floss. Both come in a variety of colors. Pearl cotton is made from threads twisted together and is available in different widths, which you will choose depending on the detail of your design and the type of fabric you are using. Embroidery floss has more versatility as each strand is composed of six threads, so you can embroider with all six for wide stitches or fewer strands of thread for finer stitches in detailed work.

Backstitch



Very similar to the running stitch, but after you make your first stitch you will begin your next stitch heading back to the left. The backstitch works well for outlines and lettering.

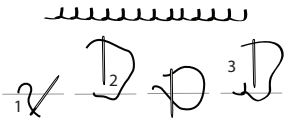
1. Bring your thread from the back of the fabric, holding onto the tail with your hand, then stitch over the tail in the next few stitches.

2. Pull through from the back and insert to form a stitch of your desired length.

3. Pull up again from underneath, leaving a space about the same distance as the size of your stitch.

4. Insert into the fabric at the end of your last stitch. Repeat steps 3 and 4.

Blanket Stitch



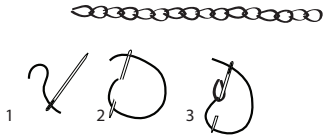
A blanket stitch can make a great edging or border, but also works well within embroidery designs. This diagram is for a blanket stitch embroidered on the edge of fabric, but it can be done within a design by simply adding an extra stitch at the bottom in place of the edge.

1. Begin by inserting your needle a few inches past your starting point, then bring it back to the start. Make a tiny stitch or two at the edge of the fabric to secure it.

2. Insert your needle at the next stitch over, starting at the top. This is when you will determine the height of your stitches. Pull under the fabric and *over* your thread, forming a loop to secure the stitch. Pull gently to make the stitch fit snugly, but take care not to pull the fabric.

3. Repeat with the next stitch, again starting at the top. Repeat.

Chain Stitch



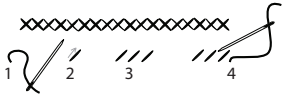
The chain stitch makes a lovely decorative line and can be used in borders, designs, and monograms. The process of making a loop and pulling your thread through the loop makes this a simple stitch for beginners. This stitch is worked on top of the fabric.

1. Tie a knot at the end of your thread and begin by pulling it through from the back.

2. Insert the needle where your first thread came out, then insert under the fabric and pull out (the size of your stitch here will determine the size of your chain loops). Pull out *over* the thread, forming a loop, and pull gently.

3. Repeat for the next chain loop, inserting your stitch at the bottom of your loop. Repeat.

Cross Stitch



A simple cross stitch is an easy way to adorn any fabric, not just the evenweave fabric that is especially made for cross stitch designs. Counted cross stitch simply involves looking at a pattern and copying the pattern by counting the squares.

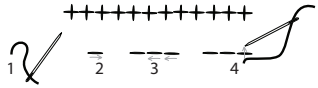
1. Bring your thread from the back of the fabric, holding onto the tail with your hand, then stitch over the tail in the next few stitches.

2. Make a stitch on the diagonal.

3. Continue to stitch left to right with the same diagonal stitch until you have finished your row.

4. Working from right to left, stitch in the opposite diagonal, forming your "X" design.

Inverted Cross Stitch



Shaped like a plus sign, this decorative stitch works well for borders or as added pattern within a design.

1. Bring your thread from the back of the fabric, holding onto the tail with your hand, then stitch over the tail in the next few stitches.

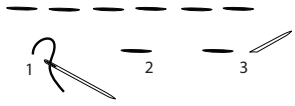
2. Make a horizontal stitch from left to right.

3. Continue to stitch working from right to left, as illustrated.

4. At the end of your row, come back with vertical stitches over each of your horizontal stitches, forming the "+" sign. Repeat.

NOTE: In the burp cloth project (page 136), the stitches are widely spaced, so you may find it easier to form one complete "+" before moving on to the next one.

Running Stitch



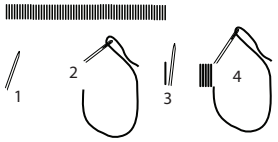
This is the most basic stitch, consisting of a simple up and down stitch through the fabric. It works well for decorative hems and edges.

1. Bring your thread from the back of the fabric, holding onto the tail with your hand, then stitch over the tail in the next few stitches.

2. Pull through from the back and insert to form a stitch of your desired length.

3. Come back again from the underside, leaving a space between the stitches. Repeat.

Satin Stitch



The satin stitch is a fill stitch that has many applications. In this book, you'll be using a satin stitch to create the nose and eyes on the blockhead animals in chapter 11.

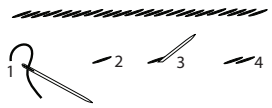
1. Working from the back of the fabric, bring your needle up at the beginning of your design.

2. Insert the needle back into the fabric above your first hole to form a stitch.

3. Coming from the back again, bring your needle next to the original point of insertion.

4. Continue to stitch in and out, following the shape of the design. You can vary the width of the stitch to make shapes or continue with even stitches to create filled lines.

Stem Stitch



This stitch is done on the diagonal, making it ideal for outlining curved designs.

1. Bring your thread from the back of the fabric, holding onto the tail with your hand, then stitch over the tail in the next few stitches.

2. Pull through from the back and insert to form a stitch of your desired length on the diagonal.

3. Pull your thread back through from the back side at the center of your first stitch.

4. Create the second stitch the same length and angle as the first. Repeat.

SEWING GLOSSARY

APPLIQUÉ: An appliqué is a smaller piece of fabric sewn on top of another fabric as an embellishment. Appliqué can be sewn by hand or by machine. Reverse appliqué (see page 35) is a variation in which the fabric appliqué is sewn underneath the main fabric and revealed through an opening.

BACK-TACK (LOCKING STITCH): A quick reverse stitch or two to lock your stitches in place as you begin sewing. Back-tacking is always required when beginning a row of stitches, except when making patchwork or pieces that will be sewn to one another or when using a basting stitch that will be pulled into gathers or removed in a later step.

BASTING STITCH: This stitch is used to hold fabric in place temporarily. It is a long stitch with wide spacing and can be done by hand or by machine without a back-tack.

BINDING: Binding is folded fabric that can be used both to finish an edge and to add a decorative element. It is often used to finish the edges of a quilt and around curves in clothing, such as necklines or armholes.

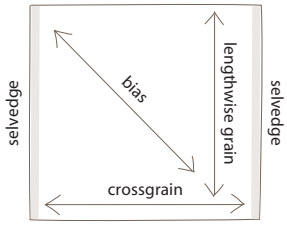
BLIND HEM STITCH: A blind hem stitch consists of a zigzag stitch followed by several running stitches. It is used to finish the inside of a hem with minimal visible stitching from the front side.

BOBBIN: A bobbin is a small spool of thread that fits in your sewing machine. It holds the thread that sews the underside of stitching.

EDGE STITCHING: This is stitching on top of the fabric, similar to topstitching, but always along the edge, generally 1/8"/3 mm to ¼"/6 mm from the edge.

ELASTIC CASING: This is a channel sewn into the fabric for inserting elastic.

FABRIC GRAIN: This refers to the direction of the threads. See the diagram and details below. For most projects in this book, the grain is not significant, but it's often important that all of your pattern pieces be cut along the same grain line for consistency.



- **LENGTHWISE GRAIN:** This grain runs along the selvedges and is the most durable grain of the fabric. You'll want to cut your fabric lengthwise if you are working on a project that you don't want to stretch or lose shape.
- **CROSSWISE GRAIN:** This grain runs perpendicular to the selvedges and has more stretch than the lengthwise grain. It works well for binding along straight lines if you do not have much fabric.
- **BIAS:** The bias is at a 45-degree angle to the selvedges and provides the most stretch possible. Many quilters believe it's important to use bias binding for all quilt projects and there are many methods of cutting to get the most from your fabric.

FAT QUARTER: In the United States, a fat quarter is an 18" x 22" piece of fabric created by cutting a full yard into quarters with a horizontal and vertical cut. Often used in quilting where smaller pieces of fabric are needed, fat quarters make it easy to pick up your favorite patterns at the store. A standard quarter yard is 9" x 44" or the full width of the fabric.

FEED TEETH (FEED DOGS): Located under the needle strike plate, this is the mechanism that pulls your fabric through the machine smoothly.

FEEDSACK FABRICS: Now a common term for a style of fabric, feedsacks were actually used for transporting food in the late 1800s and the first half of the 1900s. Women began to sew with these floral and geometric prints, which are commonly reproduced today.

FRENCH SEAMS: The technique by which seams are turned to the inside of fabric and not visible from either side. French seams are often used when added strength is needed or on projects with two facing sides where raw edges need to be hidden. See page 77 for instructions.

GATHERS: Used in fabric to create fullness and ruffles, gathers are made by pulling the long bobbin thread of a basting stitch, then stitching across with a straight stitch to hold the gathers in place.

HEM: The hem is the finished sewn edge of a project. It is formed with two folds followed by topstitching.

HOOK AND LOOP FASTENER: Commonly known by the brand name *Velcro*, a hook and loop fastener uses tiny hooks on one side and tiny soft loops on the other to stay in place.

INTERFACING: Interfacing is an essential element for suits, handbags, organizers, or any project that requires added strength or opacity. The right interfacing can add a crisp and professional look to your work. There are many types of interfacing available—and they can all be found jumbled in a pile at your local fabric store. It seems that you need a special course to decipher the different types of interfacing, but here's a quick rundown:

- **FUSIBLE INTERFACING:** This type of interfacing can be pressed directly onto the back of your fabric. There are many variations of iron-on interfacing, but it's best to choose an interfacing weight that matches the weight of your fabric.
- **DOUBLE-SIDED FUSIBLE INTERFACING:** Often referred to by the brand name, *Wonder Under*. With emulsion on both sides, this interfacing can be pressed onto the back of one fabric, the backing peeled, then that fabric can be pressed onto another. This works well for appliqué projects.
- **SEW-IN INTERFACING:** As the name implies, this variety of interfacing is to be sewn in to the fabric. It's often helpful to pin or baste this interfacing onto your fabric as you work. It works

well for lighter fabrics that might not work with fusible interfacing, or as a sturdy support for stiffer projects.

• **FUSIBLE PATCH:** A fusible patch is a small pre-cut piece of fabric with fusible adhesive on the back side often used for patching holes in clothing. I recommend them for added strength behind magnetic fasteners or buttons.

Within each of these types, there are various weights and materials, so think about the needs of your project and test the interfacing with the weight of your fabric.

MITERED CORNERS: Corners that are finished with the seams meeting at a 45-degree angle are mitered. The addition of mitered corners can add a professional look to linens and hems. See page 18 for instructions.

NOTCHING: Curved corners require notching, or cutting in of the fabric, to ease the curve and decrease the bulk at the seam. This is done simply by cutting into the seam and removing small triangles of fabric along the curve, or by simply making small straight cuts perpendicular to the seam along the curve.

NOTIONS: Includes trims, zippers, buttons, or other sewing accessories that you may need. Store-bought patterns often have sewing notions separated from fabric in the supply list. Notions may also include thread, tools, fabric glue, bobbins, and other sewing aids.

OVERCASTING STITCH: This stitch finishes off a seam, preventing it from fraying. If you do not have an overcasting stitch setting on your machine, you may simply use a zigzag stitch at the raw edge of the fabric. The overcasting stitch can also be sewn by hand.

PRE-SHRINKING: All new fabric should be washed and dried prior to sewing. This is particularly important when two fabrics are sewn together and may shrink to different degrees.

PRESSER FOOT: Most sewing machines come equipped with several presser feet with specific functions (such as installing zippers or making buttonholes), but the general purpose of a presser foot is to hold your fabric in place and flat as it is moved under your needle.

SEAM ALLOWANCE: The seam allowance is the amount of fabric that will be hidden beneath a seam. It's important to take the seam allowance into consideration as you sew. All of the patterns in this book include a seam allowance, which is generally ½"/12 mm. As a beginner, it can be helpful to mark the seam allowance on your sewing machine with a piece of tape.

SELVEDGE: The raw edges of the fabric are the selvedges. These may be white and printed with the name of the fabric and maker.

SEWING MACHINE NEEDLES: The various sizes of sewing machine needles are based on the width of the eye of the needle. Needles are sized with American and European numbers, often printed together on the needle. A general-purpose needle ranges from 70 to 90 European, 10 to 14 American. Lightweight fabrics are best sewn with a lower-size needle and heavy-weight fabrics with a higher needle size. Most projects in this book do not require a special needle, but you can experiment to see the different results. In addition, needles are available with various points to suit particular fabrics.

STAY STITCHING: This stitch is used to stitch fabrics in place to prevent pulling or fabric distortion. It is often used on lighter-weight or stretchy fabrics. It simply involves stitching around the edge of the fabric.

STITCH LENGTH: Most sewing machines have a setting that controls the length of stitching. A longer stitch is generally used for basting or topstitching, while a shorter stitch is best for securing fabrics and sewing around curves.

STRAIGHT STITCH: This is the most basic stitch used to achieve straight lines in hems, seams, etc.

TENSION: The tension setting on the sewing machine controls how taut the top thread and bobbin thread are being pulled as you sew. Reduce the tension for thicker fabrics and increase the tension for lighter-weight fabrics. If you are unsure about the correct tension setting, it's best to experiment on a piece of scrap fabric. Correct tension should produce stitches that are even on both sides of the fabric.

TOPSTITCHING: Topstitching is just as it sounds—stitching that is done on top of the fabric. It is often done for decorative purposes or to close an opening in a seam.

YO-YO: Often found in quilts, a fabric yo-yo can be used as an embellishment on many types of projects. A yo-yo is made from a shape (usually a circle), gathered on the edges and pulled into the center. See page 119 for instructions.

ZIGZAG STITCH: This stitch can be used as a decorative topstitch or to prevent the edges of a seam from fraying.

RESOURCES

B&J Fabrics, Bandjfabrics.com
Wide selection of fabric including a large selection of Liberty of London.

Cloud 9 Fabrics, Cloud9fabrics.com
Contemporary eco-friendly fabric design.

CRAFT, Craftzine.com
Online craft magazine featuring the latest news from the craft world.

Etsy, Etsy.com
Online marketplace for buyers and sellers of handmade goods and supplies.

FABRICWORM, Fabricworm.com
Fabric store specializing in modern, designer, and Japanese-imported fabrics.

FilzFelt, Filzfelt.com
High-quality, 100-percent wool felt imported from Germany.

Hart's Fabric, Hartsfabric.com
Large selection of many types of fabric, including canvas and waterproof fabrics.

Home Sweet, Homesweetbyhand.com
Hand-printed, environmentally friendly fabrics and home goods.

J. Caroline Creative, Jcarolinecreative.com
Fabric, notions, and sewing supplies.

Jessica Jones, Howaboutorange.blogspot.com
Fabric designer and blogger.

Laura Malek, Lauramalek.com
Photographer and felting artist

Mod Green Pod, Modgreenpod.com
Modern organic cotton fabric made in the United States.

Purl Soho, Purlsoho.com
Beautiful assortment of fabric, yarn, and other craft supplies.
459 Broome Street
New York, NY 10013

Sew, Mama, Sew! Sewmamasew.com
Designer fabric shop and blog with helpful tips and tutorials.

The Small Object, Thesmallobject.com
Artist and designer Sarah Neuburger.

Spoonflower, Spoonflower.com
Printer of custom fabric on demand.

Superbuzzy, Superbuzzy.com
Specializing in Japanese fabric and craft supplies.

Whipstitch Fabrics, Whipstitchfabrics.com
Atlanta fabric store and sewing studio.
1000 Marietta St, Suite 102
Atlanta, GA 30318

Whip Up, Whipup.net
Daily round-up of craft news and projects from around the Web.

For more fabric resources and crafty links, visit thelongthread.com.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

There are many people who helped make this book possible.

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I'd particularly like to thank Laura Malek, photographer and friend. She is a skilled photographer who can take beautiful photographs even with children running around her camera.

Special thanks to my blog readers who have encouraged my work with their comments and generous words over the past several years. I applaud all the women out there who are just beginning to make space in life for themselves. This book is for you.

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PATTERNS

To download and print the patterns included in this book, type http://www.chroniclebooks.com/landing-pages/pdfs/1_2_3_Sew-Patterns.pdf into a web browser from which you can print (*e.g.* desktop or laptop computer connected to a printer).

To print patterns on 8 ½-x-11-inch/A4 paper from your home computer, please follow the following "tiling" instructions. Tiling will allow you to split the large pattern page seen on screen across multiple 8 ½-x-11-inch pages, which you can then assemble into the large pattern page to use for your project. Alternatively, you can make use of a large-format printer at your local copy center.

For best printing results, print from Adobe Reader version X or higher. (Tiling options are not available on version 9 or lower.)

1. Open PDF and resave PDF onto your computer.
2. Open resaved PDF and choose Print.
3. Under Paper Size and Handling menu, choose Poster.
4. Select Cut Marks and Tile only large pages and Labels options.
5. Press OK to print.
6. Use the cut marks to line up the pages and tape together to assemble into large pattern page.

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"This is the book to have next to your sewing machine!"

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— Kathreen Ricketson, founder of WhipUp.net and author of *Whip Up Mini Quilts*

Sewing is as easy as 1, 2, 3!

In *1, 2, 3 Sew,* Ellen Luckett Baker, expert seamstress and craft blogger, offers her unique building-block approach to sewing: She presents projects in groups of three, each building on the skills and techniques learned in the project before. Multiply your skills as you go! You'll find 33 delightful projects in all, ranging from clothing to accessories, décor, and bags, and each favors fresh, simple style and usability over all else. Perfect for beginning and intermediate sewers, and complete with easy-to-follow instructions, how-to illustrations, and patterns tucked into an enclosed front envelope, *1, 2, 3 Sew* is an essential toolbox of sewing techniques.

Ellen Luckett Baker is the blogger behind The Long Thread (thelongthread.com), which receives 75,000 unique visitors each month. Her crafts have been featured on blogs such as Sew, Mama, Sew!; Etsy's The Storque; WhipUp; Craft; and The Crafty Crow. She lives in Atlanta, GA.

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